



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

CLOUD-SHADOWS

AND OTHER POEMS

JOHN WILLIAM FLETCHER

I E Andrews Esq
With
The Author's complt
aug 1876

POEMS.

Presented by the above
I E A
to his practical & esteemed friend
P. J.

CLOUD-SHADOWS;
ATCHERLEY; AND MISCELLANEOUS
POEMS.

BY
JOHN WILLIAM FLETCHER,
AUTHOR OF "THE BATTLE OF THE ALMA;" "TRYPHENA
AND OTHER POEMS;" ETC.

LONDON :
LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, LONGMANS,
AND ROBERTS.
1857.

ANV2.53

SUNDERLAND:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM HENRY HILLS.

TO
MY FATHER
THIS
VOLUME IS INSCRIBED.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
CLOUD-SHADOWS	1
ATCHERLEY	25
THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS	51
ONE DREAM OF LOVE	65
CHILDHOOD	71
THE NEMESIS OF LOVE	78
A REQUIEM	88
COME AWAY !	94
PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERING	98
THE LONELY ONE	106
I LOVE HER	111
PASS ONWARD !	114
A DIRGE	120
THE POET'S PERIHELION	125

	PAGE
LOVE CANNOT DIE	131
SWEET SIXTEEN	135
A BACHELOR'S REVERIE	140
TWILIGHT IS THE TIME TO LOVE	144
LOVE IS LIKE THE ASPEN TREE	146
GOD DOETH ALL THINGS WELL	148
MERRY CHRISTMAS	152
SHE LIVED AND DIED	155
FAREWELL	157
LINES	161
THE BLINDER THE SUBJECT THE BETTER THE SLAVE	163
DEATH	166
O! COME AWAY WITH ME	169
COLD IS THE SURF	172
TO A FRIEND EMIGRATING	173
OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY !	176
AN EPITHALMIUM	178
THE MOON SHINES ON US ALL	180

CLOUD-SHADOWS.

THE sun comes forth in silence from the east,
And like a ship of heaven, across the skies
Pursues his pathway, and along his track
Leaves streaks of cloud-foam, then in silence sets
Below the red horizon ; silently
The stars stream out, those watchfires set to guide
The soul through space to God ; and silently
The moon looks down as she has looked since light
First loomed upon her, and with promise heaved
Her crescent bosom. Still the great round world
Along its orbit rolls. The mountains rear
Their rugged heights and catch the trailing clouds
To crown themselves withal ; the forests bow
Their branches to the blast which o'er them sweeps
With a deep spirit-utterance, as though
It told them secret tidings ; plains and fields
And valleys in the golden sunlight lie
And blossom, and turn bleak beneath the storm ;
The clouds distil in dew, and fall in rain,
And burst in lightning ; and the ocean shakes

His shaggy mane, and thunders to the heavens
His everlasting voice, as he collects
The tributes of a thousand streams and feeds
The founts of water. But in silence all
Discharge their several missions ; none may tell
The secret of existence, or reveal
The mystery of life and death and things
Unseen ; a higher power has drawn the threads
Of darkness, and on all his creatures stamped
Eternal silence. Yet we may discern
Somewhat if we observe with careful eye
The aspects of mankind, the powers that rule
Like stars, the passions that contend like storms,
The holy loves and heavenward hopes that rest
Like rainbows, on the broad, deep human sea.

There was a youth who, o'er the tide of time,
Was swept and drifted like a flake of foam—
A lonely fragile being—yet his soul
Reflected like a sea-born bubble all
The radiance of the rainbow. Many mocked
The aspirations of his heart, and deemed
His dearest hopes delusions ; yet a ray
Of heaven-born sunshine fell upon his path,
And bade him hope and suffer to the end.

With nature he had held long communings,
For nature was to him a chosen friend

At all times and all seasons ; when the sun
Slanted his first rays o'er the eastern hills,
And all things glistened with the dew of heaven ;
At hush of eventide, and when the hues
Of sunset flashed and faded ; when the stars
Condensed the floating glory of the day
In shining points, as wreathéd mists collect
In dew-drops on the grass-blades ; when the spring
Swept like an angel o'er the earth, and left
A golden glow to mark its path, a line
Like light that lies behind a shooting star ;
When summer breathed a glory on the earth,
And on the clouds and waters, like a glance
From heaven ; when mellow light and dappled shade
Shewed autumn, like the sunset of the year ;
And winter crowned the whole, as night with stars
Follows the day, and tells of rest and peace.

There was a feeling in his soul, which seemed
Like the dim echo of a lovely voice
Heard in an antenatal state ; and gleams
Of light and loveliness would flash and float
Across his spirit suddenly, like bars
Of sunshine on the sunset heavens. He seemed
To live in vast and vaulted palaces
Of ages past, where slumbering echoes woke
And wandered solemnly and died upon
The everlasting silence : where there sat

The sceptred sovereigns of the realms of mind,
Wrapt in the snows of ages, and their own
Great, solemn grandeur like the hills of old.
He wandered in the past, and still his eye
Looked onward to the future, where he saw
The long-projecting shadows of the Now
Lost in the living light ; when the blue heaven
Would winnow down to greet the golden earth,
His purified and perfect bride—wipe off
The tears shed in her loneliness, and braid
The jewels of her youth about her brow.
There seemed to him a shadow on the world ;
A chill, cold, icy feeling, like a frost,
Which bound the hearts of men, and withered up
Their natural sympathies : they were content
To quench the deathless lightnings of the soul
In the dull lake of life ; to strand their hopes,
Their heaven-born aspirations, on the reefs
And shoals of time : they were the centre each
Of self, and from the drops and beams of life
Did weave a rainbow, and did deem themselves
As gods on earth, till the false glory faded,
And left them robed in rags and crowned with clay—
The fools of fancy and the dupes of death.
The finer feelings of their nature—all
The silver strings on which there lingered still
A tone of heaven—were so entwined with weeds
That the soft winds awoke no music there :

Their love was like the foam upon the wave,
Frothy and cold, an ornament of life,
A fitful fancy to be found and lost,
Re-placed and re-forgotten.

He, possessed
With the electric spirit of the bard,
With all his feelings fresh, and all his soul
Unworn, unworldly, eager to fling forth
The fountains that were bubbling in his breast,
Deemed he had but to light the beacon-fire,
And sound the watchword with a trumpet voice,
For all the world to answer and come forth
To fight beneath the battle-flag of truth,
And re-instate the banished power of Love.
So, girded with the garb of genius,
Prompted by passion and inspired by faith—
He stood and slung his flaming thoughts about,
Like stars through space ; now smiting on the proud,
Defiant donjon of the worldling's heart,
And shaking fiercely its gold-guarded gate ;
Now flinging wild and spirit-stirring truths
Among the careless crowd, like flakes of fire
From a burst bomb-shell ; luring into life,
From earnest natures, thoughts which had lain dark
And dormant ; and evoking from the depths
Of woman's gentle nature, that divine
And spiritual splendour which appears

The crowning glory of a noble cause,
Like the clear crescent on the brow of night.

The world deems such a character a fool ;
Who, say they, but a madman would give up
Ease, comfort, rank, position, and array
Himself against the settled laws of life,
To chase the wild-fire of a fevered brain—
A phantom good which never can be grasped ?
The world has set up images of clay,
And fallen down before its own hands' work,
And basely worshipped, and the smoke of twice
Ten thousand sacrifices has gone up
Like frowning clouds, and hid the light of heaven ;
And when one rises who will only bow
Before the sacred presence of the truth ;
One with divinest vision to detect
The counterfeit, and a loud prophet-voice
To give his spirit utterance ; when he smites
The idol from its profaned pedestal,
And, standing on its reeking ruins, bids
Its blinded votaries shake their fetters off :—
He must anticipate a prophet's curse,
And undergo a prophet's life and doom.
The world has framed its ordinances, laws
And customs : and when some bold soul directs
His course like thunder-clouds against the wind,
There shall be elemental strife : the world

Has fashioned idols and appointed creeds
And forged a rule of faith ; and woe to him
Who rises and declares its creed a lie—
Its worship blasphemy—its rule of faith
A damnable delusion : woe there is,
But woe unutterable would there be
If such did not rise ever and anon
To shake humanity's cold life-in-death,
And smite the lazy blood into their cheeks ;
To exorcise the demon that directs
The rabid multitude, and waft a breath
Of purity across a scene of crime.

Truly no holiday is life to them ;
No gentle transit down the stream of time ;
No pleasant dwelling with the eyes and smiles
Of children round them ; no glad voice of friends ;
No tranquil resting at the close of life,
Among the old familiar scenes of youth ;
No peaceful gathering of their ashes to
Their fathers, when the strife of earth is o'er.
They must arise and arm for conflict such
As few can wage ; they must believe and bear,
Hope and endure all things ; they must sojourn
For forty years in the waste wilderness,
To catch at last, perchance, but one stray glimpse,
Afar off, of the promised land ; they must
Count on the curses of the world—the gibes,

The taunts, the snake-like sneer, the cold contempt
Of those they would arouse ; the deadly weight
Of bleeding hearts and baffled hopes and schemes
Abortive ; they must till the barren soil
That yields for harvest naught but thorns and weeds ;
The flaming zeal of converts they must mark
Leap up, and then die out in darkness, like
A midnight rocket from a sinking ship ;
Their passionate appeals they must expect
To find fall dead and profitless like dew
Upon the desert ; they must ever lead
The forlorn hope, and perish in the breach.

Borne on the wings of youth and genius,
The poet rose, and thought to scale the skies,
And soar about the sun ; alas ! the dove
Is blinded by the beams that are flashed back
In splendour from the eagle's burning eye.
He saw oppression flourish ; fraud, like frost,
Chill moral life ; he saw mankind chained down—
Led captive from their birthright and their home,
Their harps upon the willows, as the Jews
Of old by Babylonish waters wept ;
He saw the monarch mind deposed, disowned,
The diadem dashed down, the sceptre snapped,
The "royalty in ruins" ; he beheld
A princely palace lapsing to decay,
Whose towers and battlements flashed back no more

The sunshine, but received it shudderingly,
Like a lone captive through his prison bars,
While the beams came and went, and wondered why
They met not with the olden welcome still.

Up for the Cross and Freedom ! the world's eye
Is not for ever closed in death—the soul
Is not extinct ; the sun ye thought had looked
His last upon you from the weeping west,
Shall gather up his glories once again,
And flash with all the splendour of his prime.
Ye deemed that Liberty was lost—the toy
Of fools, the sport of fiends, the fancy-fed
And brain-born vision of enthusiasts—lo !
It lives, it breathes ; arise, and, Samson-like,
Snap the green withes that bind your moral might ;
Fling off the night-mare from your souls, and lay
Your lance in rest, and leap into the fight—
No matter if ye lose your little lives.
He hymned the past in all its ancient pomp,
As sunset, streaming through stained windows, lights
The dust-dimmed statues of ancestral pride.
He rent away the veil that rolled its folds
About the present, and displayed the cold
And corpse-like figure underneath,—a tomb
Carved o'er with cherubs—unsubstantial mists,
Died in the sinking sun ; then, prophet-like,
Glancing along the ages, he evoked

The phantoms of the future—bade them mark
The glories far-off, nebulous as yet,
But destined to become the stars of earth—
The flashing gems upon the brow of time.
He preached the power of man—the active power
Of rousing, kindling, going forth full-armed,
Conquering and to conquer ; passive power—
The power which seizes and impels the soul
Right onward, like an arrow from a bow ;
Which neither yields to fortune's sun-smile, nor
The rain-storm of despair ; the power from which
The shafts of scorn fall off with deadened point ;
Which through the cross fire of a nation's wrath
Passes unscathed, and with an unblenched eye
Gazes upon the ghastliest form of death.
He shewed them love self-sacrificed upon
The altar where it worshipped ; stern resolve
Sheathéd as in a panoply of steel ;
Hope, with a bleeding breast, but, dolphin-like,
Dazzling in death ; pity, with radiant eyes,
Down-stooping like a mother o'er her babe ;
Faith lifting up its flashing eyes to Heaven,
And speaking truths eternal as the stars.

So spake he ; and though answering beacons flamed
At intervals along the mountain heights,
And fitfully responsive echoes rang
To his appeal ; above the multitude

His words were whirled like thunder o'er a corpse,
A battle-blast above a field of death,
A heaven of stars and silence o'er a waste
Of stagnant waters. Back upon itself
His soul recoiled—he could not stand alone.
To be estranged from those with whom he plucked
The flowers of childhood ; to pass out from forth
The shadow of the faith that fostered him ;
To look upon old sights, old haunts, old scenes,
And find them mocking and remorseless fiends,
Taunting him with the memory of what was ;
To mark contempt and scorn assume the seat
Whence love was wont to smile ; to watch the friends,
The tried—the true, pass from him one by one,
And range themselves among the foeman's ranks :—
This, this was bitterer than death, and bowed
His soul beneath the mountains of its curse.

His visions vanished, his cloud-palaces
Passed like the pomp of sunset, and he lay
Amid the ruins of his hopes, the wreck
Of his ambition. O ! for one fair form
To cheer his gloom—some symbol to express
And shadow forth the cause he was to serve ;
Some star to light with human radiance what
Would else be but one broad and blinding blue.
All the wild love which had lain latent long
Within his sphered soul, flashed out at length,

When night fell on him ; all the love which might,
Had it been realized, have kept him fixed
Within his orbit as he flew through space ;
Silvered with moonlight the foam-crested waves
Of his existence ; smiled away his pain ;
And calmed the passionate pulses of his heart ;
Unrealized—but rushing through his life
Volcano-like—he swerved from his set course,
And, like a stricken planet into space,
Fell headlong : like a waste of waves he lay
Whirling and wild ; and, like a madman, moaned
In mournful pain, and cried in sad, low tones
And passionate bursts the anguish of his heart.

He left the haunts of men, and in the grand
And solemn fane of nature sought to soothe
The torrent of his passion, and allay
The feverous thoughts that fluttered o'er his brain.
Far from humanity he made his home :
About him swept the mountains, grey with years,
And green with youth, and clothed with clouds and calm ;
The valleys, breathing beauty, sloped away
In endless vistas ; forests rose and rolled
Their boughs like billows in the rustling wind ;
While over all the azure heaven reposed
In the still depths of its unfathomed blue.
He lay among the long green grass, and watched
The clouds unfurl their fairy flags and sail

Like silver swans upon a tranquil stream ;
Now weaving for the sun a royal robe—
A wedding-garment, gorgeous with the hues
Of rainbows ; now like snowflakes, soft and white
And spotless, building for the maiden moon
A couch and canopy. Across the hills,
From the blue eastern billows, mermaid-like,
Morning unveiled the lustre of her eyes,
And flung the cloud-foam from her rippling locks ;
Noon, like a panther by a fountain, lay
In splendid beauty and sublime repose ;
Night, like an eastern monarch, heralded
By all the pomp of sunset, rose to claim
His crown and kingdom, and to rule supreme
His boundless empire ; or the dying sun
Stood like a stag at bay, and, lifting up
A flashing look upon the fleet, black clouds
That followed in his track, with one brave bound
Dashed into darkness—while his baffled foes
Fled gloomily across the heavens, and spread
A murky haze before the moon, whose beams
Glanced fitfully between their looming lines,
Like gleams of reason in a madman's eye,
Or thoughts of heaven upon a sin-bound soul.
The birds among the branches built, and sang
Of love and thankfulness ; the evening wind,
Across the broad brow of the weary world,
And o'er the folding flowers and bowing trees,

Passed like a benediction ; while afar,
The torrents with their mountain music, pealed
A coronation anthem.

He beheld
The beauty and the majesty of earth :
The starry lustre and the syren song
Passed o'er his brain, but passed unheededly,
Like funeral pomp above a confined corpse.
Where'er he went one image was impressed
Upon his mind's eye—one fair form appeared
Impalpable, though in the hues of life.
Among the woven shadows of the woods,
Along the mossy banks where blue bells blow,
In the still waters of the woodland lake,
In the green depths of valleys and the dim
Pine-guarded palaces of ancient hills,
In twilight's hush, and noon's profound repose,
And morning's dewy freshness—he beheld
A beauty which eclipsed the hues of earth,
Which flashed its fascination on him till
His soul reeled, and the thoughts within his mind
Flickered like fading stars. And when he watched
Through the long sleepless night, it stood out dim
In the faint moonbeams, and its eyes were bright
With light that looked not like the light of earth.
Its long fair locks floated about its neck ;
And he could see its bosom rise and fall,
As if the gentle waves of life were there,

Laughing and sparkling in the summer sun.
It spake not, but it looked—and looked as though
It flashed the words it could not utter, as
Glimpses of glory quiver in the sky
Like pulses in a vein ; and then it died,
Died as it came, a vision into air—
A creature of the brain resolved into
The elements which formed it ; and a voice
Silent and soft as starlight, swept across
His brain, and said “ O ! follow,”—and the beats
Of his poor heart, the baffled, bleeding wreck
Of his exhausted life, re-echoed, “ Follow !
Spirit, I come !”

Full many were the hearts
Of maidens whence the kindly fire of love
Had leaped to thaw the frost-work from his path.
All honor to them ; blessed be the meed
And portion of their life, and smooth and sweet
Their pathway through the wilderness : but these
Were temporary lodgements only—no
Abiding places they. And up and down,
And to and fro, among the sons of men
With anxious eye he past, to see if o'er
The dark and roaring surges rose a star
Symbolic of the vision that was stamped
Upon his soul—a rainbow that might rest
Upon his onward path, and point to heaven.
And rose it not, as the clear vesper orb

Gleams through the azure west?—and shone it not,
Serene and calm and purely beautiful
As sunset glory on a Sabbath eve?
But as the poor expectant looked and loved,
And rose in hope beneath the radiant ray,
It “westered to its setting”; pure and high,
A hand unseen still raised it higher, and like
The flaming chariot of the seer of eld,
It vanished upward from his anxious view,
And then the crystal skies closed over it,
And all was calm.

Then o’er his soul fell night,
Rayless and hopeless : on the rising sun,
And on the golden gleams of eventide,
And on the broad bright heavens, and round about
The soul’s horizon, there was written—Death.
Death ! it was stamped upon the mountain heights,
And on the stars and flowers, and on the woods
Wide-waving ; evening zephyrs sighed it out
With mournful cadence, it was borne along
The rippling streamlet, and the dash and sweep
Of waves upon the shore re-echoed—Death !
Lonely and weary felt his spirit, like
One star within the boundless blue, one ship
Upon the shifting sea, one flower amid
The snowy heights of Alpine solitude.

Dead ! what is death, and what is life, and what

Are we, poor, doubting, shrinking mortals ? Death !—
It is the dayspring of the soul, the dawn
Of a diviner state, the rainbow hues
That flash and float around the setting sun.
Then why lament and weep for those who die ?
Why let the clouds of sorrow o'er the soul
Collect ? why sigh as those who have no hope ?
A little while, and we shall pass like pure
And perfect worshippers within the veil
Which hides the inner shrine ; a little while,
And o'er time's clouded circle we shall leap
Like lines of lightning. Then shall be resolved
The mystery of life and death and things
Unseen : then the sweet fellowships of earth
Shall be renewed—the fair ones whom we loved,
And lost, and long lamented, shall appear
Like sublimated rainbows, pure and fair :
Then shall our love be—not as here on earth,
A troubled current swept against the rocks,
And ruffled by the wind, and dashed to foam,
And darkened in its course o'er worldly dross—
But calm and tranquil as a sheltered lake,
And high and holy as a summer sky,
And pure and perfect as the love of God.

So shall the future be :—but we are thrown
Into the sea of life with sometimes power
To breast the billows and fling back the foam—

To rise with a high heart upon the broad,
Wild waters ; sometimes prone, powerless, the prey,
And not the proud o'ercomer—we are forced
To float like sea-weed on the drifting tide,
The sport of every wind, the trembling toy
Of every zephyr. Whoso would attain
To manhood's growth and manhood's moral might,
Must bear upon his banner and his shield,
Love, woven in lines of silver and of blue,
And in broad, brazen characters, clear-cut,
DEFIANCE : he must fling off, once for all,
The gravitation of the soul to self.
Surrounded by brave comrades, flushed with hope,
And fired by honour, 't is an easy task,
When the commander signs, to cheer and charge
And conquer like the guards at Waterloo :
But 't is a ten-fold harder task to stand
Steady and stern upon the high hill-top,
Each burning impulse curbed, and no shot fired—
No footstep stirred, save when the living move
Up to the front ranks to replace the dead.
And so the soul which would be truly grand,
And solve the vast life-problem, must endure
As well as dare ; and patient, passive, proud,
Erect its front against a warring world ;
And like the setting sun, transmute the clouds
That gather, vulture-like, along the west,
To gorgeous-tinted birds of paradise.

The world may seem like one long avenue
Of sphynxes, stony, statue-like, and still :
Shivering and crushed, thou mayest be doomed to lie,
With all thy household gods around thee dashed
To fragments ; to behold thy brilliant prospects fade
Like fire-flies, and the grey dawn o'er thee rise,
Sullen and chill ; the funeral bell may wake
A melancholy echo, telling thee,
In slow, sad murmurs, of the loved and lost ;
The evening, with its hushed repose and hues
Of heaven, may paint the portrait of the past,
When cloudless skies were o'er thee, and a star
Beaconed thee to a future bright with hope—
A star that died upon the blue of heaven—
A future that shall never be fulfilled.
Through shattered hopes, lost loves, black skies and earth
Bolt-blasted, lurid life and livid death,
The soul must learn to pass till purified
By furnace-flame and hammer-stroke, it can
Changeless, unchallenged, rank as current coin,
Bearing the mint-mark of the universe.

Baffled but brave, twice foiled but faithful still,
The Poet paused to ponder. Youthful hopes
Gone like a morning mist ; ambition slain
By its own sword ; enthusiasm spent
Like a dark thunder-cloud, in fierce, hot tears ;
Love, high as heaven and deep as death, struck blind

And helpless by the lightning that revealed
The object of its worship ; here were met
The elements to fiercely test the tone
And temper of the sword-blade of the soul.
The Poet lay and listened to the sad
But soothing music of adversity.
He learned that they who would do deeds of worth,
Must be baptized thereto by fire ; he learned
That life was not a palace of delight—
A gilded picture and a pleasant song ;
That earth was not a happy valley lit
By starry lamps, and fanned by western winds—
A land of purple light and pleasant shade,
Flower-crowned and fountain-cooled ; that heaven was not
All rainbows, rose leaves, sentiment and sighs,
As many deem, a sublimated earth,
Not far above the sensuous paradise
Which prompts the Mussulman's wild Allah hu !
And weaves across his dying vision dreams
Of dark-eyed women and divine repose.
He learned to look on life, and not expect
The waves to open for his onward path,
The walls to fall before his trumpet blast ;
That happiness is woven in the loom
Of labour, and appears but as the fringe
On the dark edges of the clouds of fate.
He learned that he must utter forth the truths
By which he was inspired, and, sun-like, shine

Upon a stormy or a smiling sky.
He learned that life was not a brilliant blaze—
An army wheeled and ordered for review—
Arms flashing, banners floating, to the sound
Of martial music ; but a desperate fight—
A long, stern struggle, foot to foot and hand
To hand, each sinew at the utmost stretch ;
The foemen fighting, not for selfish ends,
Not in the hope to win a famous name,
And wear a star as glory's recompense,
And gain the wondering worship of the world ;
But urged by duty and impelled by faith,
Careless of what may follow ; earnest but
To battle to the utmost of their might—
To wrestle, whether the hot blood they lost,
The wounds, the weariness, the watchings, led
To fame and fortune, or a quiet grave,
A little earth and a few blades of grass,
The only record of their life and death.

Slowly, from out the night that o'er him lay,
Star-like, these thoughts gleamed, and he rose, no more
Swayed by the pants of impulse—led astray
By lights that lured and died ; building no more
Of love and hope, ambition and desire,
A palace, bright but baseless as the bow
That spans the storm-cloud ; purified by pain,
Tempered by tribulation, he arose—

The wild fire of the comet crystalized
Into the still, deep beauty of the star—
To work his part in heaven's gigantic scheme ;
Prepared to silently distil in dew
Upon the bowing buds, or on the wings
Of winds, to speak in thunder to the world.

ATCHERLEY.

ADVERTISEMENT.

RAMBLING some years ago about Rumbold's Moor, in the neighbourhood of Ilkley, I found a huge solitary mass of rock roughly hewn into the fashion of a seat. Upon enquiry I found that among the inhabitants of the surrounding villages it was known as Atcherley's Chair, and served for a landmark amid the wilderness of heath. The size, the form, the solitary position of the rock, the peculiarity of its name, and the mystery of its origin, strongly incited me to make it the subject of a Poem. The following is the result.

ATCHERLEY.

I.

It was the dawn of summer time, the dew
Fell softly, and the mist as softly rose,
And the first swallows flashed their wings and flew
Like sunbeams, sweeping upward to disclose
The shining streak of white upon their breast,
Just as a dandy shews his snowy vest.

II.

It was the time of budding flowers, and bright
And brilliant hues upon the landscape cast,
For winter had departed like "the light
Of other days," and springtide fairies past
Across the earth with step as light as fleet,
And summer sprang beneath their shining feet.

III.

Old Rumbold's Moor put on his best attire,
And decked himself out for a holiday,

His bosom felt the sun's reviving fire,
And fluttered like an aged ram at play ;
True he was old and rugged, but the old
Act as they feel and not as they are told.

IV.

Old Rumbold's Moor put on a vest of whins,
Of brilliant yellow, and of large dimensions,
And notwithstanding that it pricked like pins,
And made him like the thing one often mentions,
—The porcupine, yet viewed when in the distance,
He seemed to have renewed his old existence.

V.

This, with a gorgeous garment made of heath
And green grass, blended as an overcoat,
Made you forget that he had lost his teeth,
And that he almost had begun to doat ;
Besides, the jolly weeds which he had flung
About his person, made him seem quite young.

VI.

O ! bless old Rumbold ; many a time have I,
With one who was a brother unto me,
Lain on his green and looked up to the sky,
Or dashed about his borders wild and free
As any colt, and followed the cascade
Which wreathed about his aged breast like braid.

VII.

We gathered bilberries, and ate them till
Our mouths were blue as heaven, and had them made
Into preserves by hands that haunt me still,
Like the faint murmur of that far cascade ;
Alas ! they, too, like it have passed away,
Too fair, too frail, too fairy-like to stay.

VIII.

But to my story—on the first of May
Old Rumbold like an aged bridegroom seemed,
Who has determined that his present way
Of life is not correct, and who has deemed
There is in store for him some better fate,
And that, as yet, it is not quite too late.

IX.

And having made his mind up, he was happy,
As happy as the circumstances would
Allow, although he was not quite so sappy
As when the sea-calves sat and chewed the cud
About his base, and he was in the sea,—
But then a jolly, jolly rock was he.

X.

And Noah's flood had given him such a wrench,
That a severe dyspepsia ensued ;

Indeed he almost thought that it would quench
His spirit, for he could not take his food ;
He had been quite reduced to grass and stone,
Which, with a Christian, would be skin and bone.

XI.

But there was life about his hoary heart,
Wherefore to give in he would not consent,
But braced himself and played a manly part,
And so the favouring fairies to him lent
A helping hand, and raised him up, and made
Him laugh and leap again with shine and shade.

XII.

And now, old Father Rumbold, look your best,
It is the feast of villagers, and out
Come happy youths and merry maidens drest
In Sunday gear, and dance and skip about,
Like nature's slaves when they are loosed from toil,
And roam about, the masters of the soil.

XIII.

There are bright faces there, and flowing tresses,
And sparkling eyes that speak the soul within,
And graceful figures robed in pretty dresses,
And glancing little feet, and ancles thin
And finely turned as any you will see
Throughout this island of the brave and free.

XIV.

They were all merry—every heart beat high
With expectation of enjoyment—they
Were canopied above by the blue sky,
And fanned by gentle breezes, for the day
Seemed in good humour, and resolved to smile
Upon these children of the sea-girt isle.

XV.

They danced right heartily, as children do
Before they grapple with the storms of life,
And in and out they threaded, just as you
And I did in our early days, ere strife
And suffering taught us there were other things
On earth than such as fall from fancy's wings.

XVI.

They played at many a jovial game of old,
Such as our fathers loved, perhaps not quite
So intellectual as those which hold
High sway at present, and appear to smite
Our friends with gloom, and make fair faces look
As solemn as an old black-letter book ;

XVII.

Or else as silly as a set of flies,
Buzzing about upon a window pane,

Incapable of finding wherein lies

The mystery of what seems very plain.

(This simile is vulgar, so I must

Apologise for being in the dust.

XVIII.

Still it appeared to me, kind reader, so

Appropriate that I could not forbear

To write it down : I might have said, you know,

A mockery, a delusion, and a snare

Respecting these same games, but that might be

Passing the limits of propriety.)

XIX.

Well, let us now proceed, and watch the swains

And village maidens dancing in the sun,

Forgetting all the penalties and pains

Of life, and happy till their day be done,

And longer still, because we know to-morrow

Will always from to-day a something borrow,

XX.

Pleasure or pain ; would it were always pleasure,

And never otherwise ; but then you see

We cannot here possess the sparkling treasure

Of apples without climbing up the tree ;

And if we climb up, we may chance to fall,

And deem it better not to climb at all.

XXI.

He has a small soul, though, who would not risk
A little to procure a lasting good ;
What though the steed be young and restive, frisk,
And fret the bit, and shew his fiery blood—
A gallop on his back is better far
Than jolting onward in a wretched car,

XXII.

Drawn by a venerably aged beast,
Foaled fifty years ago, and driven by
A very ancient mariner—at least
A very ancient man who will not die,
But still persists in driving, though his days
Were long since numbered, like his steed and chaise.

XXIII.

But I 'm as prosy as the aged man
Whom I have just described, so to the charge—
“Arms and the individual”—no, the plan
Of this my tale does not deserve so large
A title ; yet 'tis of a man, and he
Was called by those who knew him, Atcherley.

XXIV.

And who was Atcherley ? I hear you say ;
Was he a hero ? did the fairies bid

Him ride about the country night and day,
To slaughter giants, rescue ladies, did
He grapple with a lion and a bear,
And thus thro' toil and trouble win his chair ?

XXV.

And what sort of a chair was that which he
Was owner of—was he professor in
Some royal learned University—
One of those hapless beings set to spin
Upon their axis, and repeat by rote
A certain form, like rowers in a boat ?

XXVI.

Or was he ?—but you need not guess ; I say
At once, the chair he had was one of stone,
Was very rough and rudely made, and day
And night was covered by the azure zone
Of heaven, and is likely to endure
Long as they call its father Rumbold's Moor.

XXVII.

The chair is in the midst of Rumbold's wolds,
And stands sublime upon the hoary plain,
Which circles round it as a mother folds
Her infant to her breast, and dew and rain
And storms have dashed it, and its form is dight
With moss mementos of the seasons' flight.

XXVIII.

Then as to Atcherley—I am aware

The author ought to let the reader know
About the hero's birth, that thus a fair

Beginning may be made, and that the flow
Of narrative be smooth, not merely gleam,
And foam, and fury, like a mountain stream.

XXIX.

I like to be precise, particular,

And plain and pointed : I admire the plan
Of shewing the first glimmer of the star

In the far east, before it climbs the span
Of heaven, and stands revealed in all its dower
Of loveliness and light and magic power.

XXX.

So I have spent much patience and much time

In trying to discover, for your sake,
My hero's parents, and the very clime

In which his little eyes did first awake ;
Also some fragments of his former history ;
But all these facts I find involved in mystery.

XXXI.

I spent, myself, some days near Rumbold's Moor,
And asked of every villager I met,

And all which there I learned you may be sure
In this veracious story I shall set
Before you—and as all I state is truth,
You each may speculate about his youth.

XXXII.

They told me Atcherley was twenty-three
Or thereabouts, when first he came to dwell
Among them, and they quickly found that he
Was quiet as a hermit in his cell,
In a half ruined house on Rumbold's Edge,
As lonely as a sparrow in a hedge.

XXXIII.

They told me, too, that he was tall and fair,
And had a wild expression in his eye,
Subdued though, like a lion in his lair,
Or lightning cradled in a cloudy sky,
Which made you fearful to disturb it, lest
The slumbering power should shew its angry crest.

XXXIV.

He bore, withal, a sadly-mournful look,
Reminding you of soft winds when they moan
At nightfall round the margin of a brook ;
And there was something o'er his spirit thrown
Like mist upon a mountain, or the shade
Of clouds upon a brook where sunbeams played.

XXXV.

Yet he was gentle, for he took delight
In flowers and fountains, and a little child
Was always sure to cause a shaft of light
To lie a moment on the tangled wild
Of his torn spirit, and dispel the gloom
An instant, like a lily on a tomb.

XXXVI.

He felt a joy in solitary ways
And lonely musings in the midnight air ;
—The sun mocks sorrow, but the moonlight plays
More plaintively, like pleasure mixed with care—
A sort of spirit-utterance like the speech
Of gentle billows breaking on the beach.

XXXVII.

At eventide he frequently was seen
Smoking a meerschaum pipe of brilliant hue
And curious shape, which had at one time been
Magnificently mounted ; 't was a true
Type of his life, he said, and he expressed
With "*gloria mundi fumus*" thus his crest.

XXXVIII.

O ! blessings beam upon the man who first
Invented pipes, and double blessings rest

On him who first those grosser trammels burst,
Found out that substance like the foamy crest
Of ocean, as the fire Prometheus stole,
And shaped the mass into the meerschaum bowl.

XXXIX.

Remembered joyfully be Raleigh's name,
A hero and philosopher was he ;
The first who grappled with and sought to tame
The weed tobacco, brought it o'er the sea,
Bound it to clay in matrimonial yoke,
And from the union developed smoke :

XL.

The smoke that " cheers but not inebriates,"
Lightens the laden breast and softens pain ;
The smoke which, like a loyal handmaid, waits
On wisdom, shedding gently o'er the brain
A balmy influence, like the vapours rolled
About the mountain top in many a fold.

XLL.

Up with the weed ! let carping minds condemn—
Let those who never smoked a pipe declare
The thing iniquitous : we know the gem
Is of most brilliant water, rich and rare ;
And spite of all the thunders they may hurl,
Shall float and fly in many a magic curl.

XLII.

Sublime tobacco ! let the minstrel sing
The praises of Virginia, bird's eye, shag ;
Smile on his soul ; thy fairy favours fling
About him ; and beneath thy brilliant flag
He will ascend from earth and proudly float
In sunny skies as in a golden boat.

XLIII.

Even I, the writer of the present tale,
Courting the muse to aid me in my task,
Apply to thee when other sources fail ;
Come to me, then, my genius—let me bask
In the sweet sunshine of thy presence, while
I pass along, beneath thy pleasant smile.

XLIV.

I fill this rosy bowl with thee, and light
With pleasant reed thy fragrant funeral pyre ;
And as thou passest upward in thy flight,
Like Phoenix from the ashes of the fire,
I feel descend on me the breath of song,
Which sweeps me like a summer cloud along.

XLV.

We left our party merry-making, and
Return a moment to the rural scene ;

The dance is done, and they have formed a band
Around a maiden whom they call their queen—
A fair, young thing, as laughing as the hours,
Whom they, with one consent, have crowned with flowers.

XLVI.

The maid was decked with beauty such as blows
Like wild flowers in the free and open air ;
Not the rich lustre of the garden rose,
But simple as the violets which dare
Scarce peep from their retreat upon the sky,
Who live unnoticed, and unnumbered die.

XLVII.

Such beauty is a relic of the days
Which passed like music when the world was young,
Before Time gathered up the wandering rays
Into one shining focus, whence they flung
A fairer but a more fantastic light,
Less pleasing, though more brilliantly bright.

XLVIII.

Yes ; she was beautiful as mermaids seem
Gliding upon the waves, or wood nymphs when
They flitted like the phantoms of a dream
Among the trees, before the eyes of men :
Her beauty made you think of these, and they
Surrounding her had crowned her Queen of May.

XLIX.

And there she sits upon a mossy mound,
Like Eve beside the fountain, innocent
And blushing like the blossoms they have bound
About her head, and happiness has blent
With modesty a wreath of hopes and fears,
Like sunbeams through a shower of April tears.

L.

Across the plain came Atcherley to muse
At eventide beneath the solemn sky ;
The meditative time seemed to infuse
A sad and silent look into his eye,
And o'er his soul the pensive thoughts that heave
The feeling heart upon a summer eve.

LI.

He saw the group at play upon the green ;
He marked their happy faces, sparkling eyes,
Which seemed in such accordance with the scene ;
The glinting grass, the rainbow-tinted skies ;
He knew their hearts were pure, and fresh, and still
As their own shadows sleeping on the hill.

LII.

And then he thought of his own early days,
When morning woke him to a world of joy,

And eve came softly up like songs of praise ;
Ere love was dashed with death ; when no alloy
Was mingled with the golden heaven that spread.
Its mellow light above his happy head.

LIII.

Before a shade had gathered on the sun,
Or frown had formed upon the angry sky ;
When he expected time would ever run
In silver sands, and rainbows never die
From off the bosom of the waveless sea,
O'er which he floated onward laughingly.

LIV.

He thought of such things, and he wondered why
These children of the mountain were so blest ;
He envied their bright face, their sparkling eye,
Their days of labour and their nights of rest ;
He almost thought that he would fling away
His finer feelings to be glad as they.

LV.

His mind seemed more than usually swept
And ruffled by the thoughts which it had raised,
As the waves chafe before the storm has leapt
Upon them, and the lightning-flash has blazed ;
Something seemed haunting him, now far, now near,
But never standing out distinct and clear.

LVI.

He heaved a sigh, he left the happy throng,
The day-god lifted up his crimson crest,
And flung down splendour as he passed along
The vast and vaulted chambers of the west ;
Then looking from his lightning eyes, he sped
With all his golden glories round his head.

LVII.

He marked the last lines melt into the gray ;
He watched the gray heaven deepen into blue ;
He saw the ærial painter, ray by ray,
Bring out the stars in the celestial view ;
—He now approached that rough, mis-shapen stone
Which rises up from Rumbold like a throne.

LVIII.

It may be that his mind was overwrought,
And formed a phantom, as the hot heavens fire ;
It may be, as some say, the air is fraught
With spirits who approach and then retire,
Like clouds upon the bosom of the wind,
Leaving no solitary trace behind.

LIX.

Howe'er this be, upon the stone there stood
The likeness of a lady, tall and fair

As the foam-crest that rides upon the flood ;
Her eyes were bright, but mellow like the glare
Of sunbeams tempered in a silver lake ;
Her voice was soft and low, and thus she spake :—

LX.

I am THE BEAUTIFUL whom thou hast seen
Through all thy lifetime, but in dreams and death ;
I am the unseen spirit who has been
About thee since thou drew'st thy earliest breath ;
In all the shine and shade, the storm and strife,
Which have composed the cloudland of thy life.

LXI.

I was beside thee when the early dew
Of childhood rested on thy little head ;
God's earliest, brightest gift, which very few
Retain when that first scene of life has fled ;
The brilliant hues of day obscure the bright
And beaming shafts that formed the gate of light.

LXII.

It was not so with thee ; thy memory clung
To those calm scenes, like clouds about the sun ;
The fair and phantom shapes of childhood flung
Their shadow on thee when their day was done,
As the last streaks of sunset never die,
But blend into the blueness of the sky.

LXIII.

And so there was a sombre sadness still
For ever brooding o'er thy brain and heart,
Like the soft, silent hues which seem to fill
The air, when one by one the stars depart,
Which seem as if they had not passed away,
But merely melted off into the day.

LXIV.

I was beside thee when thou passed'st the hours
Of daylight often by the fountain's brim ;
I smiled upon thee from the sun-eyed flowers ;
I curved the contour of the rainbow's rim ;
I loved thee, for I saw thy fancy caught
The bright reflection of the work I wrought.

LXV.

I gazed upon thee from the silver clouds,
Which glean a golden lustre as they pass
Among the sunbeams ; in the mist that shrouds
The mountain was I, in the glinting grass,
In summer's fair and autumn's fading leaves,
And in the harvest moon and shining sheaves.

LXVI.

And I was with thee when thou sought'st to find
Thy spirit-fancies in a child of clay ;

Ah ! can ye prison up the wandering wind ?—

Ye feel it, but it passes fast away,
And dieth in the deep expanse of sky ;
And so the lovely thou dost love *must* die.

LXVII.

I saw thee when her starlight image fell
Upon the lake-like surface of thy life ;
I saw and knew the shadow could not dwell,
Save a brief moment, in this world of strife ;
And yet I let thee have one look to rest
For ever like a rainbow in thy breast.

LXVIII.

I saw thee when the purple 'gan to pale,
And the fine glory of the form to fade,
When softly death approached, as fire-flies sail
Through the dim stillness of a forest shade ;
I saw thee watch the fading petals close,
And the last incense leave the lovely rose.

LXIX.

I was with thee in all, and now appear
To bid thee bind these scenes around thy soul
Like rings of light, for they shall surely cheer
Thee when the waves of sorrow o'er thee roll ;
Keep thine eye fixed upon the blessed blue,
And not a cloud shall intercept thy view.

LXX.

Look up—thy hopes are kindred with the skies,
And all thy heaven is starred with studs of light ;
They may not come to thee ; but thou shalt rise,
Pluming thy spirit's pinions for flight ;
Then thou shalt rest, and all thy dreams shall be
The lasting echo of eternity.

LXXI.

With this she paused—her form seemed to dilate
Like clouds in air, and thin and thinner grow,
Till that which was distinct and small of late,
Is visible no more to eyes below,
And nothing but the stars are shining through
The boundless, deep, unfathomable blue.

LXXII.

She was—she was not—she had passed away,
As western sunbeams down the mountains roll ;
His mind was stretched to hear what she might say ;
And when she vanished, o'er his stedfast soul
Swept a revulsion, as the stormy wave
Sucks the spent sailor back into his grave.

LXXIII.

He sank down powerless—he had now become
Oblivious of this transitory scene ;

Creation's still and spirit voice was dumb
To him ; and those who danced upon the green,
Their revels ended, found him lying lone
And lifeless seemingly, before the stone—

LXXIV.

The stone which bears his name until this day ;
They raised him gently up, and bore him home,
And much they marvelled at the cold and clay-
Like aspect of his features, and the foam
That frothed about his lips, and his small breath,
So thin, so feeble, it seemed almost death.

LXXV.

And more they marvelled, when a little girl
Came forward from the wondering group, and said
That when the wings of day commenced to furl,
And all the western sky was flecked with red,
And the last flower of eve began to fold,
She wandered from the feast along the wold.

LXXVI.

And there she saw him standing mute and still
Before the stone, on which appeared to rest
A lady, like a mist upon a hill,
Robed all in clouds, and with a crimson crest
Upon her head, and in her hand a star,
Which lightened like a meteor wide and far.

LXXVII.

And she was frightened though attracted by
 The lady on the rock, and could not go ;
 She saw the form dissolve into the sky,
 As the first sunbeams melt a wreath of snow ;
 And then she came away in haste to tell
 All that had happened to her in the dell.

LXXVIII.

She was a favourite with our hero, and
 Had very often sat upon his knee,
 While he had told her of a pleasant land,
 And brighter, bluer skies beyond the sea ;
 Of summer climes and summer landscapes, where
 The earth and heaven seem meeting in the air.

LXXIX.

Perhaps the spirit thought that in the child
 There was a kindred feeling, and allowed
 Her just to gaze one moment on her wild
 And wayward beauty, which, before the crowd,
 Is veiled like a nymph within a fount,
 Or Moses when descending from the mount.

LXXX.

For from that day her features were impressed
 With a serenest and more solemn hue,

Like ocean when the sunset streaks its breast,
And broods upon the broad expanse of blue ;
And in her eye there gleamed a depth of thought
Which shewed that some important change was wrought.

LXXXI.

And she was oftener now with Atcherley,
Wandering about with him, or sitting low
Beside him with her hands upon his knee,
Silently listening to the wondrous flow
Of fairy stories which he would unfold
To her about the palmy days of old.

LXXXII.

And he delighted to unlock for this
Fair listener the fountains of the past—
The varied scenes of beauty and of bliss,
Before a blight was breathed abroad to blast
The brow of earth, and life and love were young,
And all the morning stars together sung.

LXXXIII.

But what became of him ? I hear you say ;
Did the fine vision overpower his soul,
As a swollen streamlet bursts and flings away
Its strong embankments, or as spent stars roll
Sheer o'er the crystal barriers of the sky,—
In short, you wish to ask me—did he die ?

LXXXIV.

He lived ; and by the mountain and the stream,
Bubbling and leaping on its pebbly bed ;
In woods where thoughts are free, and, flower-like, dream
And die ; along the heath, sky-canopied ;
The waves, with solemn sound, but free from strife,
Still rose and fell upon the sands of life.

LXXXV.

And still he thought of all that he had seen,
All that had happened to him on the night
In question ; and when Rumbold's breast was green
And glowing, and the sky was blue and bright,
He often went to the oft-mentioned chair,
Where he had met the spirit of the air.

LXXXVI.

And when the moon was up, and all the stars
Were streaming down upon the shattered rocks,
And the long streaks of clouds appeared like bars
Of silver wreathed around a jewel-box,
He wandered forth along the wold to lull
His soul with visions of the BEAUTIFUL.

LXXXVII.

The rumour withered, faded, died away
As rumours do, and then was seldom heard ;

E

Few thought of what occurred but yesterday ;
Few ever felt their hearts within them stirred
By the strange story of the maid who grew
From air, and then dissolved like clouds in dew.

LXXXVIII.

Yet still the rustic, as he passes by,
Casts a half look upon the rugged stone ;
And maidens give a passing thought to try
To fancy where the spirit may have flown ;
And any villager whom you may see
Will point you to the chair of Atcherley.

THE MINISTRY OF ANGELS.

LANDMARKS of life we find, bright spots starred round
The cycle of existence, which remind
Of shining shapes that crossed our path, of beams
Which shot athwart the gloom, flowers which sprang up,
Budded, and bowed their heads before the sun,
And drank the dew-drops, green leaves in the crown
Of youth and hope—alas ! that these should leave us.
But so it is : the merry laugh has passed
And paused, and in our spirits' silent caves
An echo only floats ; the beam that blessed
And brightened our existence, ripples off
Like the last wave below the west ; the flowers
Die out like dreaming thoughts, or like the dew
That trembled on their petals ; and the leaves
We wove into a wreath to crown our heads,
Have withered like the hopes they symbolized.
And what is left ? the memory of the day
That brought the blessing to us still remains,
Like an old ruin, round whose time-worn towers
The ivy clings, like love still strong in death ;

And o'er whose head, at sunset, swallows sweep
Like evening thoughts, and sad regrets and still,
Soft, lingering memories of days gone by.

Cherish the recollection of old times,
Mementos of past scenes, for olden memories
Come back like clouds, but bear a healing balm,
And nourish folded flowers. When evening dew
Descends in silence, and the sun's broad beams
Are gathered up into the golden west ;
When the long lashes of the day are closed
Above its eye, and a deep, holy hush
Rests like a wreath upon the weary world ;
Open thy mind to the past thoughts which come
Like star-beams, one by one, for they are links
Uniting thee to Heaven. Sacred times
Are birthdays ; when we pause in life to mark
The waxing glory of the crescent moon—
To celebrate the opening of a bud—
To watch the richer ripeness which adorns
The ear of corn already white with age.
Sacred at all times are they, chiefly so
When those they tell us of have passed away.
They visit us at intervals like stars,
Girt round with glory ;—silently they speak
The language of the soul—they link together
The past, of which they formed a part—the pure,
Unbroken rainbow ; present scenes, with all

The blended beams disbanded ; and the time
When all shall be re-gathered in one round
Garland of glory, never more to fade.

High up among the shining ones that stand
For ever round the throne of God, and serve
Him day and night, there stood a saint ; she was
One of earth's angels. Though our world is wrecked
And thunder-riven, on its brow it bears
The stamp of God, the symbol of the skies.
And so its heavenly origin is marked
By some bright spirits who appear to come
Straight like a shaft of light from God ; they seem
Sent down like dew-drops to remind the world
Of Heaven ; and soon Heaven claims its own and takes
The gem of earth to be a star above.
One of these earthly angels by the throne
Was placed, enrobed and crowned ; upon her harp
She leant, and bowed her shining head, and seemed
In holy reverie, like a summer star.
Then she arose and through the seraph ranks
Passed to the gates of bliss, and o'er the broad,
Aërial waves passed like a waft of wind.
Straight like a messenger of love she went
To earth where once she dwelt, and where she left
The guides of youth and childhood's friends, and all
The joys that circle round the gates of home.

It was her birthday, and she knew that those
Who loved the day when she was there, and crowned
Her head with blessings—blessings such as spring
In the calm circle of a love-lit home—
She knew that they would feel again renewed
The pang of separation : all the hopes
They cherished, all the pure, exhaustless love
That welled up in their bosoms, all the hours
Of happy intercourse, the thousand links
Uniting families ;—the thoughts when first
The blight began to creep across the flower,
Like sunset shadows, the dim ghosts of hopes,
Long cherished when the hopes themselves had fled,
The strife of Love and Death, the many hours
Of watching and of weeping, prayers to Heaven
Sent, sprinkled with the blood of bleeding hearts,
The lengthening shadows, and the last farewell,
And the long silence, and the pure, pale face,
Death-darkened—these she knew would all collect,
In still, sad pomp, and long funereal train,
Before their eyes ; and now she came to watch,
A viewless spirit, with the weeping ones,
And imperceptibly to breathe across
Their bleeding bosoms balm, and whisper peace,
And hope, and faith.

Upon that family
The day had dawned, and though the sunbeams fell
Like blessings on the earth, and the flowers told

All laughingly of love ; to them the blue
Of heaven was but a mockery of woe,
And the blithe song of birds a sad lament,
And the flowers funeral wreaths : for where was she
Who looked upon the summer sky with them,
And listened to the birds, and loved the flowers,
And walked among them, centre, circle, all
Of their existence ? Ah ! she had been there,
And the past scenes came forth like stars we see,
But cannot reach. Where is she now ? the grave
Gives back an echo ! O ! they saw her die,—
Die with the coronal of love and youth
Just sparkling round her brow ; die with the dew
Of Heaven upon her head, and the soft light
Of summer skies just wooing her to life ;
Die like a fountain dashed into the dust,
Bright breaking into music. There had past
A planet from their constellated hearth,
Like the lost Pleiad, and a shadow veiled
The beams of all. Why should the loved ones die,
Who grew with us from childhood, underneath
The same parental shadow, bound and blessed
By the same benediction, taught to pray
To the same God, and find the self-same Heaven ?
Why not together pass along the world,
And share each other's smiles, and wipe away
Each other's tears, and love in weal and woe,
And set together in the clouded sky ?

All silently and sadly did they sit,
Like shipwrecked sailors, thrown upon a rock,
With the wild waters round them, and the roar
Of dashing billows coming slowly up,
To welter o'er their lonely watching place :
They see the great blue heaven above their heads,
And the clear crescent, and the dancing stars,
And the white sea foam ; but a burning thought
Has bound their bosoms, and they feel naught else.
So silently and sadly did they sit,
While the past days were sweeping up like waves,
And breaking on their hearts, and leaving there
A long, cold line of surf ;—and still they came,
One after one, each in a wan, white shroud,
And on the horizon there were frowning clouds,
And a low, lingering night-wind over all,
Like a long death-wail.

Suddenly there rose,
Like sunrise on the sea, across their souls
Long streaks of light, that flashed upon the foam,
And warmed the waves with splendour, and a waft
Of music, soft as star-beams, or a glimpse
Of moonlight to a captive, rose and fell,
With floating notes and dying falls, around
The darkness of their spirits. Whence it came
They knew not, but it soothed and softened them,
Like the far falling of a fountain. Dim,
Faint images appeared amid the gloom,

And spread like circles in a lake, and filled
The whole with pleasant feelings. There seemed past
Away a spell ; and melancholy thoughts,
And mournful images, and dark despair
Had vanished : still with them the music stayed,
And seemed to tell of one far-off, who loved
Them, watched them, wandered with them still ; who now
Had past away from pain, and wreathed in robes
Of rainbow radiance, sat among the spheres,
A crowned seraph ; and it told that all
Between them was a veil of flesh, and soon
That veil should be dissolved, and from the earth
Their souls should rise, like mountain springs, to flash
In the clear sunlight of the skies. It told
Of faith in God, of confidence and hope,
Of guardian angels on the earth—of guides,
Unseen but certain ; of a parted soul,
Which left a moonlight track upon the waves
For them to follow ; of the fitful struggles,
But sure success ; and of the final scene,
Death-darkened, heaven-illumined, leading on
To living light, and long-lost friends, and pure,
Unparting glory, and a home in Heaven.
So, softly, spiritually, sang the voice—
The voice of her they loved, for she had kissed
The brow of each, and sung in silver tones
The words that fell upon their hushed heart-strings,
And thawed the frozen music on them : then

They rose, and as the lines of sunset streaked
The evening of that birthday, they sent up
The sacrifice of holy, humble hearts
To Him who sits above the shifting scenes
Of earth and orders all things. Calmed and comforted,
Full of a joy in sorrow, then they said
That though the fig-tree blossom not, nor fruit
Adorn the vine, although the olive fail,
And the fields disappoint the hopes they raised,
That though the flock be cut off from the fold,
And from the stalls the herd, they would rejoice
In God, and glory in the Lord their strength.

Then passed away the spirit and the voice
To yet another scene. The lingering light
Gilding the summit of that birthday, shone
Through a small window, on the form of one
Who sat with his head bowed upon his hand.
He was but young in years, but o'er his heart
Had passed the clouds and shadows of a life.
He had built up in early youth the bowers
Imagination weaves and fancy crowns
With sunbeams ; love had flashed across his soul
With its first lightnings—he had hailed the flash,
And vowed himself to beauty, though the track
Led through the sweeping surge and flying foam,
Or through dim groves, and gardens starred with flowers,
And founts, and rills of labyrinthine roll.

He had conversed with nature, and the shades
Of the departed demi-gods, who woke
Wild music in the earth, that other men
Had never dreamed of : he had dipped his soul
Deep in the founts of poesy, and shot
Himself into the universe. He formed
From the essential beauty which pervades
Creation, and the instincts of his soul
A bright ideal, round which all his thoughts
Of earthly bliss would hover, and to which,
However far they wandered during day,
Returned at night, and slept with folded wing.

Through all the walks of life—long colonnades
And arches reared of eld, broad lawns begemmed
With dew-drops, shady nooks and beds of flowers
Where sunbeams nestled, he had sought to find
His day-dreams realised, his fancy fixed,
His high ideal in the garb of earth.
And many were the spots which love had lit,
And beauty winnowed with its burnished wing,
And he might look on them, but not to rest.
At length on his long wandering rose the fair
Embodiment of all his floating thoughts ;
And to it all his heart leapt like a lark
To heaven ; but in midway his flight was stayed.
The cloud, the little cloud, the one bright cloud
He loved, beneath the shadow of whose wing

'T were joy to sit, although all silently
As sits the brooding dove, had died away.
It paused a moment—and its silver sheen
Flashed in the sunlight ; then too fine, too frail,
Too fairy-like to live—it floated up,
And died away upon the boundless blue.
When it appeared, he rose to greet it, shook
The dew-drops from his wings, and soared aloft : —
Now ? Now the keystone had been caught away,
And all the airy fabrics he had built
Were dashed into the dust. What cared he now
For nature ; from the sunny sky had past,
And the green earth, a golden glow. The thoughts,
The feelings, and the fancies which had been
The waves that wafted him upon his way,
Tossed him about in their tempestuous sweep,
And dashed him up like surf upon the shore.

This was the birthday of the one he loved.
And silently he sat while all the thoughts
Of his past life appeared before his mind.
The happy hours of childhood and the days
That dawned and died, and died and dawned—a stream,
On whose smooth surface scarce a ripple rose ;
The growing thoughts, the widened view, the full
Light of perception and of power ; the hopes
Of happiness, the world-wide sympathies, the wish
To wipe the tear of woe, to help and heal

The broken-hearted, to fling far and wide
The seeds of liberty and love where'er
The heart of man throbbed, to disperse the clouds
Of ignorance and guilt, to roll off night,
And robe the world in amity and peace ;
The love that bound his spirit like the blue
Of heaven—the holy love that laughed and leaped
And sparkled into being, like the waves
At sunrise—the o'ermastering love that swayed
The circle of his soul ; the coming clouds,
The gathered shadows, and the sun gone down
While yet 't was day ; the gloom, thick, palpable,
Peopled with ghastly shapes and long sad wails ;
The faculties dashed out of form, the fiend
Of madness glaring with his ghastly eyes
Upon the spell-struck soul ; the misery
That welters far above the helpless head ;
The heaven above as brass, the green earth dry—
A sandy solitude, without a spring ;
The past a ruined rainbow, and the future
A mass of frowning clouds :—such were the thoughts
That thronged about his soul, and as he thought,
His spirit shook within him, and he bowed
His head upon his hand, and thinking wept.

Had the bright dreams of youth been realized,
With her he could have leapt into the strife
Of worlds, and laughed at dangers. With a voice

To soothe his sorrow, and a bosom where
He might repose his weary head and find
Fresh consolation, with a heart that throbbed
With the pulsations of the purest love
For him—the reflex of himself—he could
Have battled with the universe, defied
Dangers and hardships : girt about with truth,
Forth to the field he could have gone where Good
And Evil battle fiercely, and done deeds
To win renown—to gain the rainbow wreath
Of conquerors, and the more welcome sound
Of his great Captain, as he cried, “ Well done.”
He could have borne up bravely, for to him
She would have been as morning dew to flowers,
Or evening star to poet, a pure power
Propelling onward and inspiring all.
Now all his schemes had vanished, all his hopes
Dried up like dew-drops : he had risen and blazed
And burnt to atoms like a meteor ; cold,
Lonely and helpless felt he like a bird,
With broken wing, brought from its airy flight,
To die neglected, far away from home.

Over the hills, and through the solemn trees
And the calm evening air, came up the still,
Soft strain of music ; like the scent of flowers,
It floated through his fevered heart and brain.
He listened awe-struck, mute, and o’er his mind

Rose milder thoughts and gentler feelings. Then
He saw that God works all things, and deals out
Darkness and light to man as best beseems
His happiness and good : that we must be
Perfect through suffering : that through fiery tests
And fierce afflictions we must pass to peace ;
That hours of suffering and of sorrow, throbs
That swell the heart to bursting, rend and wring
The lacerated fibres, and bring down
The strong man to the dust, shall all appear,
In the pure sunlight of eternity,
As starry steps to heaven ; that now the light
Of faith must lead us ; that the soul was made
To struggle into day-dawn like the snowdrop
Through the sharp frosts of winter : that to work
And watch was man's appointed lot, to leap
Into the breach and storm the guarded gates
Of sin, his glory—God, his weapon—prayer,
His watchword—Onward, and his watchfire—Home.
And the still music told him there was one
Who marked him in his hours of lonely thought
And wakeful memory ; that though a cloud
Might intervene, the star was there more bright,
More beautiful than when he saw it first :
Than when the soldier perished, sword in hand,
A shining shape would bring to him a wreath
And robe of living lustre, and a voice
From the bright battlements would say, "Come in !"

Where buds are never blighted, hearts no more
Linger in loneliness, waves never toss
And tremble to the winds and break in foam.

He rose with calm and chastened joy, with still
And steady courage, with a heart subdued,
But strong to energy, and blessed the God
Who gave and took away, and vowed to watch,
And pray, and battle to the death. Then passed
Away the spirit and the voice like wind
At nightfall from the flowers, or like a strain
From a hushed harp, and died among the stars.

Such is the Ministry of Angels.

ONE DREAM OF LOVE.

THERE is one starbeam shed upon our path
From the great sky above ;
Each wandering, troubled human spirit hath
One dream of love.

One dream, one glorious dream of love revealed,
And written on the soul
In lightning characters which will not yield
To man's control.

It cometh when we deem not of its birth,
And it is swept away
As swift as shadows flit across the earth
At close of day.

Though sometimes it may fold its wing and sit
On favoured mortal bowers,
Where in its airy journey it hath lit,
For many hours :

F

Yet, whether a long visit may be won
From this bright, heavenly dove,
Or but a passing glance, there is but one,
One dream of love.

Full many an orb is rolled along the sky
Each in its shining car,
And yet the pensive soul can but descry
One evening star :

Earth hath one spring-time, when the violets peep
Up from their mossy beds ;
One harvest, when autumnal breezes sweep
The gold corn-heads :

One Lord ; one faith ; one lightning-link around
The countless hearts of man—
As o'er a shifting sky of clouds is bound
One rainbow's span :

Where'er a wandering ray of light may run
From the great sky above,
It comes to all ; but still there is but one,
One dream of love.

It cometh like the thunder, deep and loud,
And lightens on the heart ;
Or like the shadow of a shower-charged cloud,
About to part ;

It cometh like the west wind's gentle wing
Upon a summer lake ;
It cometh like the still, small voice of spring,
When violets wake ;

It cometh like a golden, heaven-sent dream
Across an infant's brain ;
Soft as the shadow of a morning beam
Without a stain ;

It cometh like a star upon the sky,
When twilight weaves its nest,
And the bright streaks of purple sunset die
Along the west :—

But whether like heaven's flash it fiercely run,
Or, like the gentle dove,
Comes winnowing down, there is to all but one,
One dream of love.

One dream of love ? There are full many dreams
That haunt the heart of youth,
Full many a siren tongue he fondly deems
The voice of truth.

They are but bubbles—bubbles of the heart,
And bubbles of the brain ;—
Marsh-meteors all, which, when they once depart,
Come not again.

They take a thousand shapes, and round each dream
A thousand colours play,
But like the dying dolphin they but gleam
To pass away.

They dazzle as they flutter to and fro,
Like fire-flies in the night,
Their fall is softer than a flake of snow,
As brief—as bright.

Alas ! that many bend their starry souls
Before an idol dead,
While the bright substance, robed in sunbeams, rolls
Above their head,

Proclaiming by the lustre of her eye,
And by her broad, bright brow,
By her swift words that flash along the sky,
By those who bow,—

The beautiful, the brave, before her throne,
And by the clouds that move
About her glory, that she is the one,
One dream of love.

One dream of love ! but it may pass away ;
On earth thou canst not gain
The full and final glory of the day,
Without a stain.

Love smiles a moment on thy path, to urge
Thy spirit in its flight ;
Then thou by faith must breast the heaving surge,
And fight thy fight.

Be bold and fearless,—grasp thy dream of youth,
And put thy trust in God,
And follow up the path that men of truth
Have ever trod.

O ! love in life is beautiful and true,
And gentle is its breath ;
But tinted with a more ethereal hue
Is love in death.

When those we love are dead the world recedes
From our undazzled sight,
And truth shines on us like the star that leads
The hosts of night.

It beacons us with no misleading gleam,
But pure, and still, and fair,
It hallows with its mild and mellow beam
The midnight air.

Keep thine eye single, let thy spirit own
One moon's imperial sway,
As the waves swell beneath one potent throne,
By night and day.

So, when the hour comes for thee to resign
Thy sword and pass to peace ;
When the great power that bade thee first to shine,
Shall bid thee cease :—

O'er the still waters of thy soul shall rest
The olive and the dove ;
And thou shalt find in Heaven thy one, pure, blest,
Bright dream of love.

CHILDHOOD.

HAST thou e'er looked upon a little child,
With bright blue eyes and glossy golden hair ;
Its young life welling up as pure and fresh
As water from a fountain ; circled by
The love of Heaven as by a rainbow ? Hast
Thou marked a babe upon its mother's breast,
Or lying in its cot, sleep calm and deep
Resting in silver silence on its form,
Like moonlight on a lily ; passing smiles,
Mysterious as the music of the soul,
Flushing and fading like the sunset's hues,
Writing strange, starry beauty on its brow ?
If thou hast seen such take them to thy heart
As messengers from God—well-springs and palms
Breaking the arid sweep of desert sand ;
Grateful as snowflakes to a fevered lip,
Pure as the planet-paven depths of space,
And holy as the hush of Sabbath eve.

Childhood ! the dew just formed into a cloud,

Pure as the heaven of which it is a part,
Ere storms have scattered it, or tempests marred
Its symmetry of form and from it lured
The latent lightning. Childhood ! early days,
Simple and stainless as untrodden snow—
When earth with buds and flowers and sunshine seemed
A Paradise perennially new ;
When from the moon the mingled magic streamed
Of mystery and beauty ; and we thought
That God lived in the blue sky, far away.
Childhood ! before the serpent drew its trail
Across our path, and dimmed the lustre which
Costs us a life-long labour to regain ;
Before we tasted of the trees of Life
And Knowledge, and felt all their promise fall
To dust and ashes.

Gulphs impassable

Divide us from that time : we have past out
From that dim dreamland, and have headlong plunged
Into the fiery furnace of the world,
With all its passions, throbbings, restless toils ;
The fever-strife of life has stricken us—
The elements which form at once the bane
And bliss of manhood. Many a sad, stern task
We have been taught ; and many a thunderous thought
Has lightened o'er our brain ; and many a woe,
Wild as despair, has swept across our heart,
Striking harsh discord from its silver strings ;

Love with her heavenly eyes has wooed us like
A fairy from a fountain, and then died
In bubbling music, leaving us alone,
Longing to follow, but we know not where ;
Fame, fortune, all the wreckers' lights the world
Hangs out to tempt poor mortals to their doom
Upon its reefs and shoals, have met us ; death
Hath caught the jewels from our life's love-crown,
And in the gloomy goblet of his wrath
Dissolved the gems, like Cleopatra's pearl.
Ah ! then—in some still moment—some sad hour,
Sitting all silent by our lone fireside,
The ghosts of early days—old times, old thoughts,
And old associations flitting by
Like gleams of a remoter world ; Ah ! then—
Gazing upon the laughing landscape left
For aye ; the sun which from a golden dawn,
Has gathered to a burning, blinding heat ;
The fresh, young corn-blade which has been matured
Through many a storm and sunbeam, till it bows
Beneath the weight of age and longs to die ;—
Who has not wished he was again a child ?

We enter in the race of life ; we run
The gauntlet of the world, whose maddening cry
Muffles the music of the heart ; the toils,
The throes, the throbbings of ambition bind
With bars of brass the soul that used to sigh

Responsive to the lightest touch of thought.
The play of passion cankers and corrodes ;
The rush of action wears away the strong,
Stern principle, as falling water frets
The rugged precipice from brow to base.
The outward-bound bark, gallantly equipped,
Her spars and streamers flashing in the sun,
Proud mistress of the waves that fall in foam
From off her peerless prow, returns at length
Storm-struck and shattered ; or lies water-logged,
The sport of winds at which she laughed—the prey
Of waves which her imperial youth disdained.
And from the world-wrecked heart of man there comes,
Sooner or later, in a low, sad wail,
Or a wild, passionate cry, the wish that he
Could steer back to the haven whence he sailed ;
Unroll again the ravelled mesh of life ;
Forget the guilt, the glory, and the gain ;
And shelter in that happy, heaven-lit home,
That angel-guarded garden of the soul,
The Paradise of childhood.

Sometimes, when
The revel reigns, and mirth and music melt
The soul, and light the eye with fading fire ;
When the wine sparkles, and the wit illumines
The scene, as fire-flies fleck an Eastern heaven ;
The long-lost image flits across the brain,
And by its simple beauty disenchant

The meretricious glitter of the feast.
Sometimes, when from the headlong tide of sin
And sense the spent soul pauses to reflect ;
When the world's pleasures pall, and the sick heart,
Sated with sights of gilded death, and sounds
Of mocking music, and delights that damn—
In the lone quiet of a tranquil hour,
And in the solemn halls of memory,
The white-robed past confronts the sin-stained present ;
The form of childhood, like a murdered maid
Who haunts the dreams of her destroyer, stands
With beauty on her brow, and purity
Within the azure of her orbéd eyes ;
In every charm a witness, sorrowful
Though silent, of forgotten hopes, and vows
Evanished, truth blasphemed, and love
Mocked at, and holiness passed by in scorn.

I would I were a child again ! The prayer
Has oft been uttered ; by the broken heart—
The bleeding breast, and by the soul that bears
A dauntless presence and an undimmed eye.
It hath ascended, winged with faith, when light
From heaven was rolling off the mists of earth ;
It hath been wafted with the stifled sob
From the sore-stricken spirit ; sounded forth
To the dim forest and the silent sky,
By the lone, vigil-wasted anchorite ;

Proclaimed in all the majesty of hope,
In all the agony of grim despair,
In all the ghastly eloquence of death.

I would I were a child again ! The course
Of time streams ever onward, like a star
Through space, that recks not of the clouds that come
And go and make wild warfare in the heaven.
These shall pass off ; the strife of tongues shall cease ;
The vain possessions and pursuits of man
Shall vanish from their votaries, like the dew
At the day-dawn ; the workmen on the walls
And battlements of this vast Babel-tower
Shall be arrested in their labour, like
The moon at Ajalon. Then they who bear
The image of the child upon their soul ;
They who have kept one spark of primal light,
And watched it as the Roman virgins watched
The fire of Vesta—cherished it amid
The battle-smoke of earth, the charnel-damps
Of moral death, the witcheries of sin,
The blasts of trouble and the breath of time :—
Shall by that lamp be lighted past the power
Of pain, the pulse of passion, the dim dreams
Of deathland ; to the palace-home of man—
The Paradise regained—the promised land,
Which, to the wanderer in the wilderness,
Fringes the far horizon with the gleams

Of glory from the golden gates of God.
For He hath said that whoso would attain
The crown of wisdom and eternal life,
Must put away the purple of his pride,
And the fine linen of his worldly lore,
Humble his heart, bow down his haughty crest.
And once again become a little child.

THE NEMESIS OF LOVE

ONWARD Time rolls his rapid waves, and bears
Upon his broad breast many varied scenes.
Splendour and gaiety move side by side
With poverty and pain ; the song, the swell
Of music and the merry dance contrast
With wasted forms, fierce famished faces, eyes
That scarce can weep for woe. Onward they rush,
Crossing each other's path, with pauseless speed,
As the stream bears them to one common sea.

There was a tragedy which I beheld
Among the sons of men ;—I watched its rise,
Its progress, and the final scene which marked
Its clouded close and darkened into death.

There stood a little cottage, hidden half
By trees and peeping slyly out like some
Fair maiden from a rose-wreathed bower ; around
Lay shining fields, where the tall corn-stalks bowed
Their burnished heads and sang i' the autumn wind ;
And gentle beasts that wandered at their will,

Cropping the herbage ; in the wood a stream
Swept o'er a small declivity and made
A mimic waterfall, and laughed aloud
At its own leap, like sportive infancy.
The fields are green as ever ; and the corn
Still ripens to a wreath for autumn's brow ;
The cattle wander there as formerly ;
The stream still leads the laughing life it led
In days of yore, and down the same descent
Sweeps like a child impatient to be free
And look upon the world ;—alas ! too like
One whom I knew when, many years ago,
I sojourned there. Childhood's first dawn had then
Just risen round her like a ring of light,
And bound her being with the blessed blue
Of summer skies ; and summer flowers and stars,
And shine and shade were all she knew of life.
She was as fair a thing as passed about
Upon the earth, as innocent and gay
As nature's self could make her. Would that we
Could pass from childhood into Paradise,
With nothing in the heart to make it weep,
Nothing to darken or defile the soul,
And nothing in the memory but home !
But yet 'tis best that we should live, for God
Hath so appointed ; and the clouds that pass
Above us teach us faith, and patience springs
From tribulation, and the broken heart—

The weary, wandering spirit passes up
From phase to phase of light, as angels pass
From star to star, and shelters in the still
And shining shadow of the gate of Heaven.

The girl grew up, and childhood's flush of dawn
Was mellowed into the maturer light
Of womanhood ; and other fancies rose
Within her breast than nature's simple ones :
Fancies half-formed, like shapes i' the weird clouds,
Now taking one form, now another, fringed
With sunlight, passing fast away,
And leaving but a pleasant memory :—
Pleasant, yet waking up a gentle wish—
A vague, uncertain longing for some good
Which she possessed not : then the fancies grouped
About one being, as the crystal cones
Condense around one centre, fixed and firm.
Woman obeys her heart and takes one leap
For good or evil, and cannot retrace,
As the fount cannot flow back to its source :—
Her spirit makes one spring, as sunbeams dart
Forth from their shining, central sun, and may
Alight upon a garden or a grave.

He was a wily but a wretched thing ;
And, like the splendid beauty of the snake,
Shone but to mislead—dazzled to destroy.

She saw it not, for woman decks the one
She loves with brilliant, evanescent hues,
As the sun spans the storm-cloud with the bow.
He was her ray of hope—the first gold gleam
That rushes from the fountain of the sun ;
And she was his irrevocably now,
For good and evil, and in life and death.

One summer night when all the stars were out,
So pale, so beautiful, so sadly still ;
When the deep hush of midnight rested on
The world, like angel watchers on a grave ;
She looked her last upon the scenes where all
Her early days were spent :—the wood, the wold,
The wild flowers she had loved, the old gray house,
Where she had listened to a mother's voice,
And felt a father's blessing on her head ;
The rooms she knew so well, which now appeared
Distinct but sad before her, like the thoughts
That pass before the mind in dreams ; the church
So venerably beautiful, as though
Angels descended as in days of old
Upon its hoary summit, and the grave
Where her fair sister had been borne by death—
The grave which she had decked with flowers, in bright
And beautiful belief that she who lay
Below would love them still :—all, all stood out
In still, and silent, and heart-breaking beauty,

G

And almost kept her back : but when the bow
Is bent the shaft must fly ; the lightning must
Leap from the cloud although it be to blind
And blast. And so she went. The scene is changed.

She dwelleth in a home among the hills,
Alone with her beloved. Woman's love—
First love, in all the splendour of its prime,
And all the freshness of its early bloom,
Sheds its divine reflection on the scene,
And sanctifies the union, else unblessed ;
As from a mass of rock the moonbeams melt
The rugged edge, and silver it with calm.
All nature to her spirit spoke of love ;
The verdant valleys, and the mossy meads,
And the spar-spangled caves, the folding flowers,
The diamond drops that sparkled on the spray,
The dark blue shield of night, star-bossed, the wind
Ruffling the rose-leaves and the lily-bells,
The sunset lighting up with purple pomp
The vast, cloud-built cathedral of the west ;—
All from her passion caught a deeper hue
And an intenser beauty ; all baptized
In the fresh fountain of her feelings, grew
Deathless, divine, a ministering band—
A rosary, whose every burnished bead
Served to suggest a thought, to prompt a prayer
For *him* : for he was there, her bliss, her bane,

Her idol, her soul's soul. The joy of sense,
Of novelty, of triumph, kept him still
The impassioned lover, the seductive soul
That fascinated first ; and still his thoughts
Were feathered with celestial fancies, still
His words were dipped in honey-dew, and still
He was to her an azure heaven of calm,
Star-jewelled, speaking peace, unflecked by clouds,
Unriven by the thunder and the storm.
So, like a woodland river fringed with flowers,
And paved with polished pebbles, whispering low
To the west wind that sleeps upon its breast,
For a brief space her life lapsed laughingly,—
A silver symphony, a seraph song,
A moonlight melody of breeze and billow.
O ! could she but have glanced upon the time
To come ; could she have viewed the precipice
Towards which she floated fearlessly, and down
Whose dark descent she would be swiftly hurled,
Blinded and breathless ; could she but have known
That all the love she lavished was as dew
Upon a blasted pine, flowers on the false
And faded brow of some bold bacchanal,
Fair sculpture chased upon a charnel-house !
But this she knew not, so she fondled fate
And dreamed delicious dreams, while in the sky
A speck appeared, and broader, blacker grew,
Till the bolt burst.

It is the old, old tale :—

He deemed the love of woman as a thing
To make a toy of—to be tossed about,
Like rose-leaves by a zephyr ; he conceived
Of woman as a wreath to crown the brow
To-day, to-morrow to be flung aside,
Faded, forgotten. She, God help her, gave
Her love, her life, her all, and found the form
She worshipped was a mocking fiend who flung
Her gifts aside, and, sated with his sin,
Bade her begone. O ! think, but spare to speak,
Of the long agony that, sea-like, rolled
Its slow, sad, sobbing waves above her soul,
And bound a ring of fire about her brain :
Pass over these, and, praying as ye pass,
Look for a moment on the final scene.

She lived, but hers was life in death, a mere
Mad mockery of existence. Passions rise
Sometimes like waves, and in their giant wrath
And their resistless fury hurl themselves
Against the heavens and make the welkin ring.
But these subside, and having spent themselves,
Having had their sweep and swing, sink down at length
And nestle into calm, as children seek
Their mother's arms and sob themselves to sleep.
But there are woes which cannot utter forth
Their deep-felt agony and cannot die ;—

Like "ocean laid flat in a boiling calm."
Such was her life, a contest between love
And death—a fever-dream where voices came—
Passionate, sad voices from the past ; shapes stood,
Like watchers round a grave ; remembered tones,
How well remembered ! floated through the air,
Like distant echoes of a passing bell ;
Stillness and silence set their seal upon
Her spirit ; and an angel's flaming sword
Turned as she turned, to baffle every hope
And blind her with its beams. She could not live ;
There was for ever one thought in her heart,
An atmosphere of agony that burned
And blasted every feeling, and wove round
Her soul the mesh of madness : so was loosed
The silver chord of life—the golden bowl,
Once bright, and beautiful, and brimmed with hope,
Was broken at the fountain : but before
The hour arrived, strong instinct prompted her
To visit once again the old, old house—
The old house, now alas ! no more the home.

She saw it peeping from its leafy nook,
In quiet happiness and calm content ;
The windows glistened—well-remembered sight !
The branches rustled—well-remembered sound !
A stray bird fluttered homeward to its nest ;
The corn-fields stirred around her with a sad,

Sweet murmur ; and the scent of flowers, *her* flowers,
Came up upon the solemn evening wind ;
While over all God's azure heaven was spread
In peaceful, pure, and passionless repose.
She knelt upon her sister's grave, she dare
Not face the living ; ah ! how gladly they
Would have received the lost and lonely one ;
How gently breathed upon her broken heart
The blessed balm of their long-treasured love.
She knelt upon her sister's grave, she dare
Not face the living and she longed to die.
She knelt upon her sister's grave and bowed
Her sad, pale face upon her wasted hands.
That face which he had called so fair was wan
And faded ; the long, sunny locks he had
So often fondled, floated loose and wild
Among the graveyard grass. The evening star
Streamed down upon those sisters—silvered o'er
The spot where lay the blighted and the blest.

Who can reveal the veiled thoughts that pass,
In pale procession, through her tearless brain,
In this her long, last spirit-agony ?
Fierce has the fight been, and the foe collects
His chosen squadrons for one grand assault,
As the Old Guard swept up at Waterloo.
The clouds are frowning o'er the setting sun ;
The waves are whirling round the sinking ship ;

The winds are buffeting the breathless bird.
That weak, worn woman, lying on the grave,
With folded arms and fixed, frozen look,
Is doing battle at as fearful odds
As the six hundred mailed and mounted men
That charged at Balaklava. Peace! the fiends
Are foiled, and in the distance, dimly heard,
There dies away the rushing of their wings.
The thunder and the whirlwind have gone by ;
And God is present in the still, small voice.

They found her in the morning—death had breathed
Upon the troubled waters of her life,
And laid them in an everlasting calm.

There stands a tombstone in the old churchyard,
Inscribed with three initials, and the words
“After life’s fitful fever she sleeps well.”

Such was the tragedy which I beheld :—
Great God ! that such should be.

A REQUIEM.

THOU hast gone home, the shadows have come down
Upon thy earthly path, a shining crown

Is thine at last ;—

From pain and fear and every care that creeps,
And every storm that blows, thou'rt gone as sweeps
An evening blast.

Thou'rt gone as melts a snow-wreath from a mountain,
Gone like a bubble from a noontide fountain—

Fast falling, flying ;

Gone like the sea-foam in a sparry cave,
Born on the ocean, swept upon the wave,
Then lightly dying.

Why do we weep that thou art gone ? the clouds
That fold the stars up in their fleecy shrouds,

Only conceal ;

The frosts that bind their slender lines among
The naiad's hair are loosed and lost ere long
In what they seal.

Around the highest towers a shadow flits,
Among the gayest hearts a spirit sits,
 Prepared to strike ;
The eagle wheeling round the noontide sun,
The stock-dove brooding when the day is done,
 Are doomed alike.

We know it, and we see that, day by day,
The fairest things to heaven are borne away
 By every wind ;
They may not stay on earth, they may not weave
A bower below, they pass away and leave
 No trace behind.

We see it fronting us in every phase
Of nature, through the lapse of nights and days,
 The often said,
As oft forgotten story, that the surges
Which roll the vessel ring the funeral dirges
 Above the dead :

We see it but we feel it not ; death seems
More like a phantom of our waking dreams—
 A floating fear
Which interpenetrates the chain of things,
And looms out dimly everywhere, but clings
 To nothing near.

We mark it in the distance like a mist ;

It sounds like far-off thunder and we list
 Its dying roar ;
We watch the flash leap forth, but soon the sky
Is calm and quiet as the stars that lie
 Along its shore.

It bounds us as the horizon bounds the world,
But, as we move, its trailing tent seems furled,
 And pitched again ;
The bark goes down at once, no more to rise,
We look, and lo, serene the ocean lies
 Without a stain.

Yet, soon or late, the truth upon us flashes,
Like lightning born amidst the sudden crashes
 The sky upheaves ;
We realize the fact of death when those
We love are lying, shrouded like a rose
 In its own leaves.

Ah ! then it breaks upon us, sometimes slowly,
Like a cloud on the heavens hushed and holy,
 Instinct with fire ;
And sometimes like the simoon fierce and fast,
Leaving the spirit, when 'tis overpast,
 A funeral pyre.

Who hath not had some fairest earthly tie,
Some ewe-lamb that did in his bosom lie

Like dew in flowers ;
The heaven-sent focus where the heart's affection
Found scope, and end, and brighter resurrection
For all its powers ?

And when the tyrant sternly took away
The one ewe-lamb that in his bosom lay,
And loved him well—
Felt he not then the power of death who shakes
The soul, and tramples down our hopes, and wakes
The funeral knell ?

We see heaven mirrored in a drop of dew,
And so the reflex of the fair and true
Was orb'd in thee ;
Thy soul was as the cloudless sky of spring,
When all the starry bells of ether ring
Their melody.

Thou wert to me as is a lingering sweep
Of spherul music, when the angels weep
To hear the strain—
A lovely melody which overleapt
The golden gates of God, and now has crept
To heaven again.

Although the strain has ceased, and far away
The echo floated, like the dying day,
The influence dwells

Like moonlight on the water, and has power
To beam and brighten when the darkest hour
Of sorrow swells.

O ! gentle were thy thoughts, and gentle still
Thy memory rests, like star-beams on a hill,
Within my breast ;
And still I feel thy presence and thy smile,
Like gleams of glory from a far-off isle,
Where dwell the blest.

Why did'st thou die ? We know Jehovah reigns,
The first and last, and wisely he ordains
Our weal and woe ;
And so he bade thee veil thy beams and shine
For ever near the excellence divine,
With seraph's glow.

Be present ever to my spirit's sight,
Be near me in dark hours by day and night,
On me beneath
Still smile serene, so when my tears shall flow,
The drops shall sparkle with a golden glow—
A rainbow wreath.

And though 'tis sad to know that thou art gone,
And though there sound like ocean's fitful moan
The words " No more :"
Faith flies beyond the boundaries of the world,

And never droops its wings till they are furled
On yonder shore.

And though my life be troubled like the ocean,
Above the scene of dark and wild commotion
Bend like the sky,
Whatever intervene still clear and blue,
Whose bright and glowing veil the stars shine through,
That never die.

COME AWAY !

From the world's bewitching glances,
From its perilous advances,
From its sharp and shining lances
 Set in orderly array ;
From its error and delusion,
Mirages whose light illusion
Leaves us lost in dim confusion ;
 Come away !

From its fading joys, and slender
Comforts, from its beams which render
But a meretricious splendour,
 Like the sunset's pomp and play ;
From its currents flowing under,
From its friendships rent asunder
With a sound like distant thunder ;
 Come away !

Hast thou loved and marked thy shining
Star-flower from thee slow declining,

And funereal shadows twining
 Round the evening of thy day—
Not a beam thy sky to brighten,
Not a glance thy hope to heighten,
Not a friend thy woe to lighten ?
 Come away !

Hast thou changed the wreath of gladness
For a cypress-crown of sadness,
Does the fiery fiend of madness
 Glare upon thee by the way ?
Are the dead, like billows, breaking
O'er thy lonely pillow, making
Mournful music for thee waking ?
 Come away !

To a land the fancy painteth,
Which no blight of earth e'er tainteth,
Where the spirit never fainteth
 'Neath the burden of its clay ;
To a land unsung in story
Or in song ; beyond the hoary
Hills, beyond the sun's dim glory ;
 Come away !

Where the moonbeams never glimmer
On an eyeball growing dimmer—
On the last glance of the swimmer

Ere his pulse has ceased to play ;
Where the heart-throbs never quicken,
As we mark the death-damps thicken
O'er the loved—the early stricken ;
Come away !

By the starlight shadows stealing,
And the evening owlet wheeling,
And the muffled music pealing
Round the church-tower old and gray ;
By the morning cloud far-sailing,
And the early dew exhaling,
And the purple sunbeams paling ;
Come away !

By the clouds above thee sweeping,
And the stars behind them peeping,
By the scythe and sickle reaping,
And the sheaves that strew thy way ;
By the shroud that wraps affection,
By the sun whose red reflection
Tells thee of a resurrection ;
Come away !

Like a dew-drop in the morning
From the bud it is adorning,
Like a skylark mounting, scorning
All the lower lights of day ;

Like a rainbow when disbanded,
Like a flash of lightning landed
When its cloudy bark is stranded ;
Come away !

Like a wild bird homeward winging
Through the ether, blithely singing,
Like the music from bells ringing
Out a peal at close of day ;
As a spirit swift emerges
'Midst the sound of funeral dirges,
Like a sailor from the surges ;
Come away !

PERFECT THROUGH SUFFERING.

THERE are feelings which cannot be guaged,
There are joys we can never unroll,
There are sorrows which never can be assuaged,
In the depths of the human soul.

O ! a glorious thing is the heart
In its dewy and youthful prime,
Ere the spirit has taken an active part
In the passing events of time :

When brilliant hopes descend
Like sunbeams upon the hills,
And the musical murmurs of night winds blend
With the ripple of summer rills :

When the heaven above is bright,
And the broad horizon blue,
And the mountains laugh in the silvery light,
And the buds are bathed in dew :

When the shadows come and go,
And the sunbeams flit and pass,
And the lingering lapse of the fountain's flow
Glides through the gleaming grass :

Ere the glory fades away,
As melts the morning cloud,
And the lengthened sunbeams glance and play
On the shadow of a shroud.

But, as our days advance,
We find the golden glow
Departs, like the sheen of a polished lance,
Or the delicate hue of snow.

The cradle becomes a pall,
And a shadow veils the sun,
And the torrent's roar drowns the fountain's fall,
And the clouds roll thick and dun :

And the birds can scarcely urge
Their flight, as they slowly wheel,
And the bells ring out a funeral dirge,
Instead of a bridal peal :

The silver chord is slack,
And dim is the golden bowl,
And the fountains, choked and moss-grown, lack
Their former power to roll.

In the folded bud there sleeps
The germ of its sure decay,
And the viewless and terrible storm-fiend peeps
From the clouds of a summer's day.

We see not the storm prepare,
Nor the blight begin to work,
But we know that in everything earth calls fair
The seeds of disorder lurk.

The sky, when the storm is spent,
Broods calmly on folded wing,
And the beautiful bud is bowed and bent
To the earth without murmuring.

And so with the fair who grow
In our hearts like the flowers we love ;—
Like angels they come, and like angels go
To the better land above.

No furrows their folding mar,
But they lightly melt away,
As, planet by planet, and star by star,
The night is dissolved in day.

They murmur not, nor complain,
But, soft as the silent snow,
Steal gently away without a stain,
Beneath the sun's warm glow.

They go—but they leave behind
A memory that never fades,
Like the music left by the western wind
In the depth of the forest glades.

When the shining heavens are calm,
And the nestling flowers asleep,
Gentle genii, like an invisible balm,
Through the woven branches creep,

With a far more solemn spell,
And a far more potent power,
Than the mighty march of the thunder's knell
In the awful midnight hour.

So, thoughts of the loved and lost
O'er the tranced spirit pass,
As the viewless, impalpable net-work of frost
Rests on the spires of grass.

'Tis delicate, soft, and fair—
But it comes with an icy thrill ;
And a mystery broods and settles there,
Where all before was still.

Dark doubts of our present lot,
Like mists on a morning sky,
Phantasmal visions—we know not what,
And wishes—we know not why,

Hang heavily, flit and float,
With a strange, unearthly spell,
While an echo comes like the fading note
Of a far-off dying swell.

They come—increase—collect—
With a heavy, settled gloom,
Till the labouring spirit is well-nigh wrecked
On the reefs around the tomb.

O ! a bitter, bitter lot
Is a burning, blighted love ;
And 'tis hard when the earth yields no green spot
For the weary, wandering dove.

Round the soul flit ghastly shapes,
With a terrible laugh and grin,
While a wreath of rainbow colours drapes
The hideous form of sin.

Then the tempter points in scorn
To the scenes that around him lie—
“ It were better for thee had'st thou never been born,
It were better now to die :

Would'st thou pass beyond the power
Of the fiends that mock thy grief ?
Free-will is mortality's highest dower,
Apply thine own relief.”

So the tempter tempts, and some
Are caught in his specious snare,
And their hearts are cold, and their voices dumb,
And their wretched spirits—where ?

Heaven's herald has gone forth,
His footstep is sure and slow,
And he deals to the death-doomed sons of earth
Lamentation, mourning, woe.

Woe to the fair—the young,
Woe to the hoary sage,
Woe is the curfew wailingly rung
To the world in every age.

Think not that in this ye see
The shade of a demon's wing ;—
For Heaven hath declared mankind must be
Perfect through suffering.

That the stars may serenely lamp
The luminous azure deep,
The thunder must march with a terrible tramp,
And the lambent lightning leap.

In the earth and the sea, deep down,
Are the brightest jewels born,
And from twilight's glimmering, ghastly frown,
Peep the merry eyes of morn.

Dew for the drooping flower,
Peace for the troubled sprite,
Rest for the world, is the wealthy dower
Of the sombre-suited night.

Pass on with a stricken soul,
Pass on with a bleeding breast ;—
The surging billows of time shall roll
To the realms of endless rest.

Pass on with a hope that weaves
Bright hues round the spirit's march,
As the gorgeously-tinted autumnal leaves
Form the year's triumphal arch.

Pass on with a faith that crowns
The heavens with a sunset glow,
And on every cloud that falls or frowns
Imprints the radiant bow.

Believe that the path ye tread
Is the path that all have trod ;
Believe that the sky beams bright o'erhead,
And the golden goal is God.

Thou shalt learn that the silver swell
Of knowledge by faith sublimed,
Is more high, and holy, and deep than the bell
By thy innocent childhood chimed.

Thine shall the fortune be
Of a mountain stream, whose life
As it bounded along to the slumberous sea,
Has been storm, and stress, and strife ;

Which down many a precipice driven,
Bore a shattered but conquering crest,
Till it floated to calm, and the stars of heaven
Were glassed on its azure breast.

THE LONELY ONE.

HAST thou bright faces round thy fire,
And merry eyes that answer thine ;
A shelter where thou mayest retire—
Thy own peculiar vine ?
Have there been flowers about thy way,
Since first thy race on earth begun ?
Then raise thine eyes to Heaven and pray,
God help the lonely one !

The seasons, as they pass away,
Scarce touch thee in their rapid flight,
Thou hast a beam for every day,
A star for every night ;
As soft as snow-flakes fall thy hours,
Thou scarcely knowest they are gone ;
Think of the leaden sky that lowers
Above the lonely one.

Thy heart can sympathize with all
The joyous tones of nature's strain—

The river's roll, the fountain's fall,
The far-resounding main,
The cricket chirping in the grass,
The skylark dancing round the sun ;—
Know that like wails of death they pass
Above the lonely one.

The scent of flowers is joy to thee,
The insect's wing, the wild bird's nest,
The waves of sunset rolling free
Along the crimson west,
The evening hush, the morning dew,
The star that shines when day is done ;—
These are thy blessings—think how few
Attend the lonely one.

His spirit cannot take a part
In nature's universal glee,
Snapped are the sweet chords of his heart,
Once strung to melody ;
They but give out a long, low thrill,
Which, like a distant minute gun,
Sounds sharp, and agonized, and shrill ;—
God help the lonely one !

The bright sky which the sun hath lit,
To him seems but a roll of lead ;
The stars are funeral lights that flit

Above the sheeted dead ;
The low wind is a dismal wail ;
The birds and flowers he strives to shun—
He cannot bear their merry tale ;
He is a lonely one.

And yet, in youth, the early dew
Sparkled upon his happy heart,
All glowing was his onward view,
Like heaven when night-wreaths part ;
But storms rolled up his opening day,
And gloomed his path, and hid his sun,
And left him to pursue his way,
A weary, lonely one.

The gourd that shadowed o'er him pined,
The fount that bubbled near him dried,
His star—his guiding-star declined,
His day just dawned and died :
All shivered was his golden bowl,
His flower was withered 'neath the moon,
The waters weltered o'er his soul :—
He was a lonely one.

He has no fireside bright and warm,
No spot which he can call a home ;
He has to grapple with the storm,
And breast the billows' foam :

No kind face meets his weary eyes
To soothe him when his task is done—
There is no star of peace to rise
Upon the lonely one.

Amid dark looks, and hearts of stone,
When quenched is every earthly light,
'T is hard to wander on alone—
And, single-handed, fight ;
'T is hard to wrestle all the day,
And feel the goal is scarcely won ;—
Such is his lot—kind reader, pray
For the poor lonely one.

Speak gently to him, for he hath
A human heart as well as thee,
Is seeking through this mortal path
The same eternity ;
Be kind—he is a bruised reed,
The lines of care are round him spun,
Pity his sorrows, love and lead,
And help the lonely one.

Love him—for love has been the lamp
That lit him in the march of life,
His consolation in the camp,
His watchword in the strife ;
Love him—for love has led his soul

To lands beyond the setting sun—
Removed the lure, but fixed the goal ;
O ! love the lonely one.

Love him—his spirit is as mild
And mournful as the brooding dove ;
Love him—for thou hast been a child ;
Love him—for God is Love ;
Love him ; as thou shalt hope to bear
A palm of peace when life is done,
Look up and breathe the heartfelt prayer—
God help the lonely one !

I LOVE HER.

I LOVE her, but not with the love which speaks
As none but a lover dare ;
I love her, but not as one who seeks
To woo, and win, and wear :
Between us there rolls a dark ravine,
Which the future can never fill ;
But yet by my soul she is crowned a queen,
I love her—I love her still.

I love her, but not with a love that would seek
In a marble-moulded brow,
In a flashing eye and a tinted cheek,
For a shrine where the heart may bow :
My passion is not like the light that leaps
And dies on the storm-god's breast,
Nor a hectic feeling that ever heaps
The fire of its own unrest.

I love her, because where her presence abides,
There is calm and chastened light,

Like the moon when in cloudless splendour she rides
O'er the azure fields of night ;
Because, touched by the glance of her tender smile,
And the sound of her silver voice,
The o'erburdened spirit may rest awhile,
And the stricken soul rejoice.

I love her, because where misery frowns,
And the tears of anguish flow,
She comes like a shaft of light, and crowns
The scene with a radiant bow ;
Because to the lost, whom the grandly good
Pass by with a stoical calm,
And leave ebbing away in their guilty blood,
She breathes a benignant balm.

I love her, because in her breast she bears
A heart like the gentle dove,
And around her radiant forehead wears
The starry crown of love—
The love which is throned on a loftier seat
Than to faith and hope is given,
In whose ample embrace all mankind may meet,
Like the stars in the arch of heaven.

I love her, because, like a woodland stream,
Her lifetime murmurs away,
And ye trace it but by the flowers that gleam

Where its current has chanced to stray :
I love her, because all her actions spring
As unconsciously true and free
As the whistling wind, or the wild bird's wing,
Or the waves of the restless sea.

I love her, although she can never be more
Than a beautiful vision to me,
A vessel that touched at a desolate shore,
And then swept o'er the fathomless sea ;
And though, when she has gone to the home of her heart,
O'er my spirit a shadow will creep,
I will lighten the sorrow and lessen the smart
By the image I ever shall keep.

I love her, and always the passion will play
With a solemn, beneficent light,
Whatever the clouds that encircle my day,
Or the stars that illumine my night :
And the only return that I ask as the due
Of a love that forever will beat,
Is a stray thought sometimes for a heart that rings true,
And a smile when we happen to meet.

PASS ONWARD !

THERE was dew adorning
 MY bygone hours,
And the flush of morning
 Upon the flowers ;
But the clouds gave warning
 Of wasting showers :
 All hope was vain,—
The stroke impended,
The bow was bended,
The clouds descended
 In deathsome rain.

The flowers fell faded
 Before their foe,
And their bloom was shaded,
 No more to blow,
And their bright locks braided
 The earth below—
 A damp, cold bed
For forms so slender,

For things which render
Such scent and splendour,
To lay their head.

Can the lamp re-lighten
The parted beam ?
Can the star re-brighten
Its fading gleam ?
Or the fresh foam whiten
The dust-dried stream ?
When the mildew binds
The cornfield's glory,
Will the ears wax hoary,
And sing their story
To autumn winds ?

So, lost for ever,
When once 'tis lost,
Is love's endeavour
To thaw time's frost ;
When the last links sever,
The bark is tost
On the ocean's surge :—
And the only greeting
We gain, are fleeting
Echoes repeating
Its funeral dirge.

There are hours of gladness

With rainbow wing,
But days of sadness
Around them cling,
And sometimes madness
Becomes our king ;
Then follows death—
The loved, the hated,
Oft deprecated,
But surely fated
To draw our breath.

There is morning breaking
With dewy eye,
And bright birds shaking
Their wings on high,
And glory waking
Along the sky,
There is noontide bloom ;—
Then sunbeams fading,
And dim streaks braiding
The vapours shading
Their heaven-built tomb.

There are fountains glancing,
And dew-drops flung,
Round our steps advancing,
When life is young,
There are sunbeams dancing,

And sweet notes sung,
There are fresh, cool shades—
Long lawns far-sweeping,
And soft winds creeping,
And star-beams peeping
Among the glades.

But the future sheweth
Another scene,
The glad earth gloweth
No more in green,
The loud wind bloweth
Where calm hath been,
The dew-drops die ;—
Sere leaves are whirling,
Dun mists upcurling,
And clouds unfurling
Across the sky.

O ! doubting mortal,
Such things must be,
Till thou pass the portal
Which leaves thee free
To the life aortal
Awaiting thee—
Till thou quit this sod,
Which thy action bindeth,
Thy vision blindeth,

Till thy spirit findeth
A home in God.

Pass onward !—knowing
That brighter hours
Are serenely glowing
In yonder bowers,
And heaven's love flowing
O'er earthly flowers,
Once with thee here—
Who now are lying,
Undimmed, undying,
Afar from sighing
And pain and fear.

Pass onward !—lowly
Thy life may glide,
And darkly, slowly,
Advance the tide ;
But the stars hushed, holy,
Above thee hide,
And shine by night—
When the clay that cumpers
Thy spirit slumbers,
Thou shalt join their numbers,
And share their light.

Pass on, contending,
Fulfil thy march ;

Though rocks are rending,
And rough winds parch,
See o'er thee bending
The rainbow's arch—
The sign of peace :—
Pass on, and borrow
In toil and sorrow
Fresh strength, to-morrow
Thy strife shall cease.

The diamond lightens
The darkest cave ;
The sea-foam whitens
The roughest wave ;
The green grass brightens
The humblest grave ;—
Love smiles on all :
Pass on ! care flinging
Aside, and singing ;
The bells are ringing
Thy heavenward call.

A DIRGE.

O ! NEVERMORE the sun shall fling
A glow of gladness o'er my breast ;
And nevermore the birds shall bring
Sweet thoughts of love and rest ;
And nevermore the starbeams find
Their shining image in my mind.

A shadow that will not depart,
Like clouds that will not fall in rain,
Hangs heavy on my drooping heart,
And on my weary brain—
A gloomy cloud that will not pass,
But broods above like burning brass.

O ! for a fall of dew to light
Upon my parched and panting clay ;
O ! for a star to spot the night
That will not roll away ;
O ! for a cool, soft wind to blow,
And bid my life's dried fountains flow.

O ! that thy spirit would arise,
And make me once again rejoice,
O ! for a glance of thy glad eyes,
A tone of thy loved voice ;—
A glance—a word would come with power,
Like dew upon a drooping flower.

They say that thou hast passed away,
And never wilt return to earth,
Though night by night, and day by day,
The stars renew their birth,
And every morn the blithe birds rise
To sing their music to the skies.

I saw thee when my spirit bowed
Before the beauty of thy power ;
I saw thee in a wan, white shroud,
Like a night-folded flower ;
I saw thee in a coffin laid,
And death thy deathless lustre shade.

And yet I wonder how the taint
Of dust could settle on thy brow,
And why thy presence does not paint
My waiting spirit now,
And why thine image does not gleam
Upon my life's wave-ruffled stream.

It cannot be that thou art caught
Away for ever from my sight ;
I cannot realize the thought
That thou hast vanished quite—
Gone, like a bark on ocean's surge,
Below the blue horizon's verge.

And yet the lapse of time steals on,
And suns and planets rise and fade,
And many a moonlit month has gone
Into the land of shade,
Since thy bright presence was to me
A star upon a summer sea.

The frosts had just unbound their grasp,
And loosened their close-clinging girth,
That the warm vernal sun might clasp
His long-divorcéd earth,
And soft winds fluttered to and fro,
And gentle flowers began to blow :—

Then thou didst look upon the skies,
And on the ever-shifting sea,
And on the painted butterflies
So beautiful and free ;
—But there was something in thine eye,
Which said thou wert about to die.

There were the hues of glory flung
Upon thy gently-fading form ;
Half earth, half heaven, thy presence clung,
Like rainbow in a storm—
A thing to shine and not to stay,
But in the sky to melt away.

A band of angels bore thee up,
Beyond the sunbeams' burning bed,
And left to us the silver cup
When the bright wine was shed—
The dove without the power to sing
A note, or wave its burnished wing.

O God ! they laid her in a cold,
Damp grave, among the worms and clay ;
And round her beauty there is rolled
The vesture of decay :
—But there are little flowers above,
And gentle grass such as we love.

And it is open to the sky,
And the stars kiss it every night,
And the low winds, that sweep and sigh,
Stop in their onward flight,
And gather round, and hush their breath,
And brood upon this dream of death.

The angels come and whisper low
About it in the summer air ;
'Tis they who make the flowers to grow
So beautiful and fair—
'Tis they who make the grass to bloom
Upon this little, lonely tomb.

My life is in that grave—I hear
The angels whisper all the day ;
And even when I wander near,
They do not pass away,—
But bend upon me looks of love,
And point me silently above.

O ! when the sands of time have told
The last hour of my mortal strife,
And the dark shades of death are rolled
Across my lonely life—
O ! lay me where the angels keep
Their watch around my love's last sleep.

THE POET'S PERIHELION.

THE moon shone forth from her light-girt lair,
When evening swept through the silent air,
As the beautiful form of truth comes down
On the mind when the outward shadows frown ;
And over the earth her influence cast,
Like the hallowed remembrance of days long past ;
And the stars gleamed through her veil of beams
Like the flowers that blow in the land of dreams,
Or the naiad-blossoms that bloom and shake
Their wings in the depths of a lucent lake :
And a few light clouds floated slowly o'er,
And broke on the distant horizon's shore,
Like wreaths of foam which the sunlit waves
Sweep gently along into distant caves,
For the mermaids who haunt those grotts to wear
In circles around their yellow hair ;
Or like barks, in which guardian angels sail
O'er the depths of heaven, when the sunbeams pale,
Dropping softly down, as their course they sweep,
The pure and impalpable snow of sleep,
And the radiant hush of calm delight

Which the spirit feels at the fall of night.
There was silence in heaven, and silence on earth,
As if nature were calmly awaiting the birth
Of the genius of peace, whose power should pass
Through the heart, as dew into blades of grass,
And whose sway should subdue and guide the soul,
As the waves submit to the moon's control.

It was just the hour when the spirit feels
What the brilliant light of day conceals—
That the boundless and beautiful realms of space
Are the homes and haunts of a countless race ;
And can almost imagine the fire of their eyes
Flashing out by fits from the far-off skies ;
And can catch a glimpse of their shadowy hair,
As they float along to their heavenly lair :
And can fancy it hears in the murmuring wind
An echo that lingers, and floats behind,
Of a melody sweeter than any whose birth
Belongs to our exile land of earth.
'Twas the hour to inhale the evening air,
And to feel in the heart the voice of prayer—
Of the dutiful homage which all should give
To the Being in whom they move and live.
'Twas an hour for the heart to be calm, yet oppressed
With thoughts too solemn and deep for rest—
A horizon of love for the soul to absorb,
Like a girdle of light round a golden orb.

Among the moonbeams the Poet went,
Like a passive and sweet-toned instrument,
Which gave back a response, low or loud,
To the wingéd bird, and the wandering cloud,
To the violet veins of light that lie
Like furrows of fire in the sunset sky,
To the orb of night, and the shapes that rest,
Like flakes of foam, on the heaven's blue breast.
He looked to the earth, the air, the sea,
And he felt like a bird of passage free—
Free all that glorious view to claim,
Free to send his soul, like a lightning-flame,
Through the depths of space—like a meteor immerse
Himself in the gulph of the universe.
He felt that wherever the broad heavens bent
The trailing folds of their blazoned tent,
Wherever the waves of ether swept,
Or a star on its own bright bosom slept,
Wherever the clouds and zephyrs played,
Chequering the earth with light and shade,
Wherever a comet curved its train,
Or the volumed vapours loomed out like a chain
Of mountains, between whose portals, afar,
Like a beacon-fire, shone a single star,
Or weird shapes danced on the rainbow's rim,—
There was beauty, and love, and joy, for him.

There was always in nature's vast expanse

To flush his cheek, and to kindle a glance
Of light in his eye, as the skies are fain
To flash out the fluid they cannot contain.
But to-night there was more than the usual glow
On his cheek, and his pulse owned a quicker flow ;
O'er his face there played smiles clear and high
As the magic lights in the northern sky ;
And glorious thoughts in his mind sprang up,
As the falling wine fills the festal cup—
Shining and close, as the stars that stand
On the bright, blue shores of the heavenly land.
For the spheréd soul that had been his guide,
And the dream of his youth, since, at morning-tide,
The silver vision dawned on his sleep,
As Venus arose from the Cyprian deep—
The divine ideal that ruled his soul,
And lifted him up from the world's control ;
Had descended to-day in mortal guise,
As a planet dawns on the straining eyes
Of him who has long and anxiously swept
The skies where its hidden lustre slept.
Yes ! that which by night had haunted his dreams,
As the viewless nymph haunts the limpid streams ;
And been woven with every waking thought,
As the streaks of electric fluid are wrought
In the texture of every floating cloud ;
To the search of which his life was vowed,
As the crown of his hopes—as the Golden Fleece

Lured the Argonauts through the isles of Greece :—
As the nautilus suddenly crests the wave,
Or the diamond gleams from the darksome cave,
Had appeared—and he wandered abroad to tell
His joy to the scenes he loved so well.
For the clouds and skies and the woods and streams
Were more to him than the worldling deems ;
They were brothers and friends, though with different
tongue ;
Like the Sabbath bells when a peal is rung,
They together formed a melodious chime,
Evoked by the hand of their master Time ;
Which had power to carry the soul away,
On a bark of sweet sounds, to a distant bay, .
Where the shadows that streak earth's face are not,
And oppression and wrong are all forgot ;
Where the spirit wanders o'er yellow sands,
Where angels gather in golden bands ;
Where the musical march of waters sweeps,
And the genius of love his vigil keeps,
Spreading over the earth a lovely hue,
And gently dissolving in silver dew ;
And the blue heaven looks like a glorious nest
For the tremulous, twinkling stars to rest ;
Where the slant sunbeams form a shining way,
Down which seraphs descend at dawn of day ;
Where the flowers in their odour exhale into air,
As the spirit ascends to God in prayer.

With a joyous heart, and a tearful eye,
He sent up his grateful thoughts on high :
He felt that the one who had hitherto cheered
His life by faith, had at length appeared ;
That the cycle his soul would have to run,
Would be henceforth cheered by his central sun ;
He felt he had grasped the crowning gem
That adorns the poet's diadem ;
That the faith of his heart was merged in sight,
As the sunset heavens in the starry night ;
That the plant which but once in a lifetime flowers,
Had blossomed within his spirit's bowers ;
That the fitful struggles of dawn were past,
And the noonday glory revealed at last.

LOVE CANNOT DIE.

'Tis written round about the golden girth
Of earth, and air, and sea, and sky,
In darkness and in light, in death and birth,
In melody, in madness, and in mirth,—
Love cannot die.

The heavens for ever bend their shining blue
Above the world from east to west,
And still they tell it out in drops of dew,
And still the truth, though old, is ever new
And ever blest :

The sun rejoicing in his morning beams,
Or breathing out his latest sigh,
Proclaims it by the glory of his gleams,
And by the clouds that haunt his death, like dreams—
Love cannot die.

The waves of ocean in their wildest sweep,
And in their gentlest rise and fall,
Acknowledge it from out their deepest deep,

And the lake wavelets as they softly creep,
Repeat the call :

The skylark bears it up upon his wings,
And trills it to the summer sky ;
Where'er a tree its sombre shadow flings,
Or the green ivy round its branches clings,
Love cannot die.

The river rushing onward to the sea,
Through happy fields of flocks and herds ;
The busy humming of the honey-bee,
The fountain gushing out and rolling free—
Add each their words :

Where'er a cricket chirrups in the grass,
Or flower supports a butterfly,
The hymn rolls up from voices in a mass,
From tenor and from treble and from bass—
Love cannot die.

The mother deems she is supremely blest,
To guard her child where'er it go ;
And she would pierce her own maternal breast
To save its life, to shadow it with rest,
To shield from woe.

And silently she tells by every tear
She sheds, by every long-drawn sigh

Which only guardian angels ever hear,
By every golden hope and leaden fear—
Love cannot die.

Are there not sunny thoughts and hopes that fling
A lustre o'er the days of youth,
When kindred hearts together closely cling,
When the horizon is a rainbow ring,
And all is truth ?

Then every aspiration of the soul,
And every feeling mounting high,
And every joy which knoweth no control,
Proclaim it as they laugh, and leap, and roll—
Love cannot die.

And there are days of darkness in the world,
When hope is gone and joy is fled ;
When friends forsake us, like the birds which furred
Their wings and sung, but quickly paused and whirled
Above our head.

Then thou shalt find it in a loving face,
Which will not leave though all should fly,
Which clings about thee with a close embrace,
A smile which nothing earthly can erase—
Love cannot die.

In every passing bell, in every tear,

In every look and sign of woe ;
Where'er a lone one watches by a bier,
Where'er a star may shine, a grave appear,
A wild flower blow :—

Yea, it is written round the golden girth
Of earth, and air, and sea, and sky,
In darkness and in light, in death and birth,
In melody, in madness, and in mirth—
Love cannot die.

SWEET SIXTEEN.

WHAT one man but as poison drinks,
 Another deems divine ;
And tastes as various are, methinks,
 In women as in wine :
Of womankind all several styles
 Do some admirers glean ;
But from St. James unto St. Giles,
There are no witcheries or wiles,
So soft and sunny as the smiles
 Of sweet sixteen.

I've sounded every several string
 Upon the lyre of love,
For mine has been a wandering wing,
 Like the deluge-drifted dove :
Each pulsing, palpitating play
 Of passion have I seen ;
But neither moonlight's mellow ray,
Nor comet flashing on its way,
Commands for me the sovereign sway
 Of sweet sixteen.

A mountain-sheltered lake may lie
 Locked in a languid rest,
With nothing but the boundless sky
 Reflected in its breast :
Such is a favourable phase
 Of wedded love I ween ;
But for the waveless calm that strays
Through silent nights and dreamy days,
Give me the light and shade that plays
 Round sweet sixteen.

Fair is the summer-lightning glance
 That flashes on the sight ;
And fine the look that, like a lance,
 Slays where it chance to smite :
Glorious is woman when she springs
 Aloft in full-orbed sheen ;
Yet she, from those grand, golden wings,
Not such a fascination flings,
As from the crescent light that clings
 Round sweet sixteen.

O, sweet sixteen ! the summer-dew
 Of youth is on thy head,
And all the horizon of thy view
 Is rimmed with rosy red.
A leaf upon a tropic tree,
 Flecked with the fire-fly's sheen—

A bank beloved by bird and bee,
And sloping southward to the sea,
The symbols and the signs should be
Of sweet sixteen.

Upon thy long hair, hazel-brown,
A rippling sunstreak lies,
Like the calm light that used to crown
The palms of Paradise.
Thy face is as a half-blown flower,
Which but the sun hath seen,
Which charms, unconscious of its power,
And sparkles still in shine and shower—
Such is the happy, heaven-sent dower
Of sweet sixteen.

With all a woman's constancy,
Yet simple as a child,
A fawn beneath a forest tree,
Gentle, but shy and wild ;
A brilliant, bower-born butterfly,
Gorgeous with gold and green ;
A star with timid, twinkling eye,
Just peeping through a twilight sky,
Irresolute to dawn or die,
Is sweet sixteen.

O ! long an ardent devotee,
I bowed at beauty's shrine,

Quaffing with suicidal glee,
 Deep draughts of witching wine :
But, one by one, the stars and moon
 Were whirled from off the scene ;
Love, like a buoyant fire-balloon,
Swept from me skyward, not too soon,
And left me singing to the tune
 Of sweet sixteen.

I entered love-life very gay,
 And left it very grave,
The conquering hero taught to play
 The captive and the slave.
'Tis past—my soul no more shall groan
 Beneath a cruel queen ;
There is one Una—one alone,
Who still has power to hold her own
Upon my spirit's lion-throne—
 She's sweet sixteen.

Through storms and sunbeams, smiles and tears,
 The world is onward rolled,
And setting suns and lapsing years
 Proclaim us growing old.
'Mid fading flowers are leaves which peep
 Perpetually green ;
So, while Time's sandgrains slowly creep
Down to the everlasting deep,

While loved ones die and lone ones weep,
I wish my pet could ever keep
Just sweet sixteen.

A BACHELOR'S REVERIE.

WHERE are all my sweethearts,
All the pretty girls,
With their laughing, loving faces,
And their fairy floating curls ?
Where are all the merry maidens
Who a fascination flung,
Like an everlasting rainbow,
Round the days when I was young ?
Annie was an angel,
Pollie was a pet,
Jeanie was a jewel
Magnificently set ;
O ! they 're all gone, all flown, all whirled away,
Like swallows with the summer, or the salt sea spray.

Lolling in my easy chair,
Smoking my cigar,
The memories of my early days
And visions from afar
Twinkle faintly on my spirit,
Like a dim, lone star ;

Green glanced the earth below,
Blue the sky above,
When I first my part rehearsed
In the play of "All for love."
Spangles, jewels, dresses,
Gewgaws, glitter, glare,
Prompters, footlights, drop-scenes,
Are all found—where ?
O ! they're all gone, all flown, all whirled away,
Like swallows with the summer, or the salt sea spray.

Hey ! the days, the happy days
Of beauty and of bliss,
When I hunted for the misletoe
And cared about a kiss ;
Hey ! the days when eyes looked love,
And dimples raised delight,
And the palm an answering pressure gave
As the dear voice said "Good night."
Hey ! the days, the sunny days,
When trifles, light as air,
Could cause the fountains of the soul
To bubble fresh and fair :
O ! they're all gone, all flown, all whirled away,
Like swallows with the summer, or the salt sea spray.

Pleasant walks in shady lanes,
Seats by bower and tree,
Gatherings round the winter fire,

Social cups of tea ;
Syllabubs and sentiment,
Cobwebs lightly spun,
Pic-nics, evening parties, all
Flirtation, frolic, fun ;
Lovers' fiery ardour scorning
Sober married folks,
Lovers' cooings, lovers' quarrels,
Jealousy and jokes :
O ! they're all gone, all flown, all whirled away,
Like swallows with the summer, or the salt sea spray.

'Tis said man is a pendulum
Betwixt smiles and tears ;
Now I'm sobered down entirely,
I'm getting up in years,
And I am not moved a hair's breadth
By Cupid's hopes and fears.
The follies of my unfledged youth
I almost have forgot,
I like a quiet evening pipe,
And a glass of something hot ;
I never now wear white kid gloves,
Nor turn my collars down,
There are grey hairs in my whiskers,
And I'm bald about the crown :
I'm a bachelor on principle,
So ye eyes, black, grey, and blue,

Ye bonnie brows, ye dimpled chins,
Ye locks of sunny hue,
Here's a slight resumé of your charms,
And a long—a last adieu.

O ! Susan was a “cannie thing,”
And Kate was kind but cold,
And Dora shone like a royal dame
On a field of cloth of gold ;
Maria was a matchless maid,
All summer-dawn and dew,
And Rose was prim and proper, like
A prayerbook in a pew ;
And Fanny like a firefly flashed,
And Lizzie was a squib,
And Nimmy and Jemima both
Were gems but apt to jib ;
And Annie was an angel,
Pollie was a pet,
Jeanie was a jewel
Magnificently set :—

But they're all gone, all flown, all whirled away,
Like swallows with the summer, or the salt sea spray.

TWILIGHT IS THE TIME TO LOVE.

TWILIGHT is the time to love ;
Heart to heart then closely clings,
Like her nestlings when the dove
Spreads the shadow of her wings.

When the sunbeams lightly fold,
Like the petals of a rose,
Lovely when they are unrolled—
But still lovelier in repose :

When the clouds that herald night,
Like the gleaners in the corn,
Gather up the grains of light
That lay scattered since the morn :

When the great heaven looketh not
With its burning eye of blue,
But, its royalty forgot,
Finds its lashes dimmed with dew :

When its stately crown is placed
In the chambers of the west,
And its royal head is graced
With a gentle, starry crest :—

Then the heart too puts away,
Like the blessed heaven above,
All the burdens of the day,
For the lighter thoughts of love.

Toil and care may cast a blight
Over all the sunny hours,
But they ever take their flight
At the folding of the flowers.

LOVE IS LIKE THE ASPEN TREE.

O ! LOVE is like the aspen tree,
Through which the light wind comes and goes ;
And love is like the honey-bee ;
And love is like the rose.

The quivering aspen marks the flight
Of spirits nothing else can feel ;
So love will start, however slight
The wafts that o'er it steal.

The honey-bee finds sweetest dew
In flowers which others would repel ;
Love sees the beautiful and true
Where none was known to dwell.

Lightly the rose-bud doth unfold
Beneath the sunny summer sky,
Its leaves are one by one unrolled,
And one by one they die :

They die—but beautiful in death,
And fragrant all they still remain ;
So love exhales not with the breath,
But lives, nor dies again.

O ! love is like the aspen tree,
Through which the light wind comes and goes ;
And love is like the honey-bee ;
And love is like the rose.

GOD DOETH ALL THINGS WELL.

THE seasons, as their shadows fall
Successively upon the earth,
And weave the cradle or the pall
Of each year's death or birth,
Proclaim it,—in spring's silent showers,
In summer's green and glowing flowers,
In autumn's grain-stored cell,
In winter's white and waning powers—
God doeth all things well.

At morning and at eventide
The sky distils its drops of dew,
The clouds and stars sit side by side
On heaven's bright banks of blue ;
Breezes and beams like blessings play
Among the locks of dying day ;
Night's starry curfew-bell
Blends with the solemn hues of gray :—
God doeth all things well.

Mortal ! however dark the cloud
Thou seest hanging overhead,

However long, and deep, and loud,
The waters round thee spread ;
However lonely be thy lot,
However desolate the spot
Where thou art doomed to dwell ;
Remember thou art ne'er forgot—
God doeth all things well.

When Jacob thought his age's crown
Was lost beyond the power to save,
He said his gray hairs should go down
With sorrow to the grave ;
And yet he lived to find again
His long-lost son, he lived to gain
A land wherein to dwell,
And own 'mid darkness, fear, and pain,
God doeth all things well.

The hosts of Israel, rank on rank,
Stood on the sandy Red-sea shore,
The Egyptians on their rear and flank,
And the broad flood before ;
They deemed themselves again made slaves,
Yet they survived to hear the waves
Ring their foes' funeral knell,
And sing above their watery graves—
God doeth all things well.

Ruth from Naomi would not part,

Though wandering from her native sod,
Resolved to share her mother's heart,
Her country and her God ;
Content to gather from the ground
The ears of corn that lay around,
In fields where strangers dwell—
A kinsman and a home she found :—
God doeth all things well.

When thou art girt about with plains
That glimmer to the golden moon,
And not an envious shadow stains
Thy eve, or morn, or noon—
Doubtless thou canst do little less
Than raise thine eyes to heaven and bless
Him whence thy blessings fell,
And with a grateful heart confess—
God doeth all things well.

But when the sun that lit thee hath
Been rolled from out thy darkened day,
When there are clouds about thy path,
And thorns along thy way ;
When thou hast suddenly been thrown
To watch, to work, to weep alone,
Did not thy heart rebel,
And find it difficult to own—
God doeth all things well ?

Yet all is well—for he who holds
The spheréd heavens in his hand,
With the same touch the dew-drop moulds,
And rounds the grain of sand ;
He clothes the lilies in the fields,
To bird and beast fit food he yields,
And, when the tempests swell,
From the rough wind the shorn lamb shields :
God doeth all things well.

He knows thy frame, and what is best
To call forth all thy latent power ;
And so he gives thee toil or rest,
The sunshine or the shower :
He gives thee good—he takes away,
He knows the weakness of thy clay,
Thy strength proportions to thy day ;
And though thou mayest not tell
On earth, why thou must furl thy tent
So often,—why thy heart is rent,
And the reed snapped on which thou leant,—
Have faith, pass on, and be content—
God doeth all things well.

MERRY CHRISTMAS.

MERRY CHRISTMAS ! Snow is falling
From the murky, leaden sky,
And the lonely winds at nightfall
With a sobbing sound sweep by ;
Wailing as the spirit passes
Slowly from the dying year,—
Wailing—but their mournful voices
Strike not on his heavy ear.

There are other voices sighing
Sadly, though ye hear them not ;
There are other spirits weeping,
Unregarded or forgot.
From this grand old isle of England,
Which the good and brave have trod,
There are groans of famished thousands
Ever going up to God.

From the narrow, noisome cellar,
Where the filth soaks through the wall,

Where the rotting rafters moulder,
And the lazy sewers crawl ;
Where the dreary daylight blinketh
Through the broken roof o'erhead,
And the cold, cold rain comes dripping
Down upon the wretched bed :

In the dark, dank lanes, from garrets
Where the Plague and Want encamp,
Like two tigers in a jungle,
Or two serpents in a swamp :
From small, ghastly children moaning,
While the fiends their life-blood suck,
From fierce, gaunt men, fever-haunted,
And weak women, famine-struck.

Listen ! let these mournful murmurs
Not unheededly expire,
As ye join the happy faces,
Round your merry Christmas fire ;
Let your spirits burn within you,
That such tragedies should be
But a bowshot from your dwelling,
In this island of the free.

Ye have tender hearts ye mothers,
Daughters, wives—shall it be said
That your wretched sisters perished,
Wanting home, and fire, and bread ?—

See the bright eyes of your infants,
And their cheeks so smooth and fair :
They have children—God have mercy
On the children of despair !

Help the poor as Heaven has helped you,
As ye hope for Heaven at last ;
By the thoughts the season wakens,
By the memories of the past :
Make the sun smile on the wretched,
Bid them hope, and bid them rest ;
And so ye shall find your Christmas
Doubly happy, doubly blest.

SHE LIVED AND DIED.

SHE was my love, she was my life,
She should have been my bonnie bride ;
She faded from a world of strife—
 She lived and died.

A radiant, rainbow-tinted shell,
A daisy on a lone hill side,
A fountain in a mossy dell,
 She lived and died.

A modest star that in the blue,
And beaming breast of heaven doth hide,
As in a rose a globe of dew,
 She lived and died.

One being—all the world to me,
A friend, a helper, and a guide—
Like music on a moonlit sea,
 She lived and died.

The bud bowed down its burnished head,
And faded as the west wind sighed

A requiem for the beauty fled :—
She lived and died.

A glorious, heaven-hued child of earth,
Two worlds in one frail form allied,
Divine in death as bright in birth,
She lived and died.

The moonlight melted from the stream,
The boat sank in the sobbing tide—
And like a Paradisal dream,
She lived and died.

The waves of death between us flow,
Yet nothing can our souls divide ;
For me—for me alone—I know
She lived and died.

FAREWELL.

IN the shadow of thy presence
My spirit loves to cling,
Like the brooding dove at eventide,
With fair and folded wing :
Like sunset through stained windows
Comes thine influence to me,
Or like a shaft of moonlight
On a tempest-troubled sea.

Love smiles upon the beautiful,
And gilds their vessel's prow,
And perchance he wears the chaplet
That shall circle round thy brow :
But I may not crown thee, lady,
For with me life's flowers and fruit
All are withered like the lily
When the worm is at the root.

There is a power between us,
Like the fiery sword that fell
On the eyes of our first parents,
From the grounds they loved so well :

There is a curse upon me
That hath power to blind and slay,
As the stealthy gliding pestilence
Creeps through the summer's day.

All I ever loved is blasted,
In the bud or in the flower,
And I have no charm to stay the arm
Of that mighty, unseen power.
Sometimes it cometh like the swoop
Of a rushing mountain wind,
And passeth on its piercing path,
Leaving no trace behind :
Sometimes with muffled footfalls,
Like a spirit in the night,
Known only by the silent death
That follows on its flight.

O ! I stand on a lonely strand,
Strewn o'er with shattered wrecks ;
Round which the night-winds flap their wings,
And fearful shapes, and nameless things,
Each, each its mite of horror brings ;
While over all a phantom clings,
To baffle and perplex.

Then look not on me, lady,
With thy calm and earnest eyes !

My existence must be lonely,
Like a comet in the skies :
O ! look not on me, lady,
For thy spirit hath a spell
To lure me from the darkness
Where I am doomed to dwell.

And well I know there will be woe,
And agony, and tears ;
And throbbings of the breast shall quench
The light of sunny years ;
If what I wish should come to pass,—
So lady, fare-thee-well ;
Remember me but as the note
Of some strange passing-bell :

Or as a bird that built a bower,
A summer in thy eaves,
But swept away to other lands,
With last year's flowers and leaves :
I pray that thou mayest never tread
The path that I have trod,
That thou mayest live within the light
Of love, of Heaven, of God.

Farewell ! the shingle and the swamp,
The billow and the spray,
The power and panoply of death,

And darkness, and decay,
Are mine :—for thee the household heartn,
The blended bow that lends
A lustre to the lapse of life,—
Home, parents, children, friends,

I feel the mystic spirit shut
The sunshine from my cell ;
My last fond hope is quenched by that
Sad, solemn funeral knell :
I could have loved thee, lady—but
It may not be—farewell !

LINES.

I WOULD not remove one streak that lies
On the bleeding breast of the sunset skies ;
I would not hasten one tint to melt
From the storm-god's radiant, rainbow belt ;
I would not stifle the parting breath
Of the breeze that sighs in the grasp of death ;
Nor scatter the leaves of the fading rose ;
Nor harshly disturb the lingering close
Of a lovely song ; nor dash away
A moonlight beam from a ruin gray
With the weight of years ; nor displace a leaf
Of the ivy that muffles its mighty grief.

Of lightest mould are the loveliest things,
Heaven-hued birds have the swiftest wings—
Ever ready prepared for flight,
Passing away like a streak of light.
—And death makes solemnly sacred all
On which the prints of his fingers fall—
Solemnly, sadly, sweetly still,
Like the diademed snow on a heaven-lit hill,

Or the dim, dissolving, distant trail
Of night when the stars begin to pale.

Lady ! I know by the light that lies
In the orbéd depths of thine azure eyes,
By the nameless something that seems to dwell
With thee, like the sound in the ocean shell ;
To thy native skies thou wilt soon away,
As the dew-drops rise on the sun's first ray.
I would not fetter thy upward flight,
Nor dash thy brow with the world's dark blight.
I will watch thee rise as the skylark springs
From his lowly nest on his sun-bright wings :—
I will think of thee when the demons roll
Their ghastly eyes o'er my spell-struck soul,
And rejoice that I asked thee not to share
This burden of death, this dream of care,
Which my spirit is doomed through life to wear.
I will think of thee as a happy star
That glanced upon me, then floated afar,
With no cloud—no stain its light to mar,
To a land where the lovely and sinless are.

THE BLINDER THE SUBJECT, THE
BETTER THE SLAVE !

'Tis a very sad truth, but the truth must be told,
That men's bodies and souls can be purchased for gold :
It is sad—very sad, but you pay down the price,
And the goods can be got just like sugar or rice :—
And remember, all over, on land or on wave,
The blinder the subject, the better the slave !

See the African, born like a beast, and resigned
To the wreck of his body, the blight of his mind—
Whom his masters relentlessly, cruelly flog
To his work, till he dieth the death of a dog,
Proves the truth unto which your attention I crave—
The blinder the subject, the better the slave !

Look at home, at the numbers compelled to sustain
The burden of poverty, peril, and pain ;
Who exist unregarded, and drop into death
At the blast of the famine or pestilence' breath ;
And write round the walls where they rot in the grave,
The blinder the subject, the better the slave !

Mark the thousands of children who never were young,
With a leer in their eyes and an oath on their tongue,
Who are taught from their cradle to swindle and swear,
And the gallows, and death, and the devil, to dare : —
Is there no friendly hand ever stretched forth to save ?
The blinder the subject, the better the slave !

Why is ignorance spread, like a pestilent dew,
On the spirits of all save a favourite few ?
Why are millions ground down to the dust—left to roll
In their chains, till the iron eats into the soul ?
Hear the reason—the motto of bigot and knave—
The blinder the subject, the better the slave !

Can it be there is one of the thousands who call
This island their own land, the loveliest of all—
Is there one would retain such a pitiful rag
As the curse of his soul, while the “meteor flag
Of England” floats over the free and the brave—
As the blinder the subject, the better the slave ?

Burst the bonds—snap the chains—fling the fetters
away,
And flash in the light of the glorious day ;
Let the might of God's truth drop like dew from the wing
Of the lark on the stultified spirit, and fling
In the teeth of the tyrant his damnable stave—
The blinder the subject, the better the slave !

Let the lightning leap forth from the east to the west,
As a symbol of hope to the dark and oppressed,
As a flame to consume all the stubble that lies,
Like the pressure of doom, on the heir of the skies,
And a sword to consign to one general grave
The arms of the despot, the chains of the slave !

DEATH.

NATURE is lovely in her life, but still
More beautiful in death—bright in decay ;
Serener light and richer lustre fill
The canopy which copes the dying day.

The storms expire in lightning, and the stars,
That stud the battlements of heaven's blue dome,
Flash flakes of fire when they dismount their cars ;
The clouds die out in dew, the waves in foam.

The strife of elements is gathered up,
And rolled away beneath the rainbow's span,
And from the crescent moon, as from a cup,
The holiest influence fills the heart of man.

All glorious hues adorn the dancing leaves,
Which twinkle merrily before they fall,
And the faint echo of the night-wind weaves
A spell more potent than its loudest call.

The sweetest tone of music is the last,
Long, low vibration when the chords are still ;
And when the shadow of decay has past
Upon the rose its richest scents distil.

The falling fountain sparkles into spray ;
The death-struck swan most ravishingly sings ;
And o'er the dying dolphin's form there play
Hues like the storm-god's radiant rainbow wings.

Death touches with ethereal pencil all
That comes within the circle of his power,
The gentle traces of his fingers fall
As soft as snowflakes on a rose-wreathed bower.

A solemn, sad, and spiritual hue
Rests on the form o'er which his wing has swept,
Like the young, breathless flower-buds when the dew
And starlight shadows round their nests have crept.

The power of pain has passed away, the sigh
That heaved the heart is hushed, the damp, hot brow
Is cold, and clear, and cloudless, and the eye
Wanders and watches, wakes and weeps, not now.

The waves of life are hushed and laid to rest
Like sleeping babes, and the wind's lonely sweep,
And the foam's flash, upon the water's breast
No more as sentinels their vigil keep.

There are no clouds to shadow it, or fraught
With thunder-showers or drops of gentle dew,
Serene and calm it lies, reflecting naught
But the broad, beautiful, and boundless blue.

O ! COME AWAY WITH ME.

O ! COME away with me,
 O'er the sunny, sunny hills,
To a land where love is free
 As the rolling of the rills,
Calm and quiet as the caves
 That shine along the shore,
And constant as the waves
 That sweep for evermore,
 My Love,
That sweep for evermore.

From the frowns that cloud the face
 Of the weary, weary world,
Where the wild bird finds no place
 For its pinions to be furled ;
Where the dew is rudely shaken
 From the folded bud, before
Its young eyes can dimly waken,
 To close for evermore,
 My Love,
To close for evermore.

From the glancing, glancing light,
That gleams to die away,
From the brief, brilliant, bright
Meteor-smile that lures astray—
From the lightning-crown we gain
Amid the thunder's roar,
To be a fire about the brain,
To burn for evermore,
My Love,
To burn for evermore.

From eyes that flash and fade,
Like the moon upon the wave,
From the clouds that cast a shade
On the cradle and the grave ;
From cities dashed to dust,
And garlands red with gore,
From the cursing rage and cankering rust
That riot evermore,
My Love,
That riot evermore.

Where the land laughs out in green,
And the sky gleams bright and blue,
And the only veils that intervene
Are wreaths of floating dew ;
Where the willows merely weep,
That their meed of joy runs o'er,

And the waves and sunbeams laugh and leap
And lighten on the shore,
My Love,
And lighten on the shore.

Where for love each sound and sight
A welcome garland weaves—
The fount that dies in a dream of light,
And the wind among the leaves,
The drip of the diamond rain,
The hum of the mountain bee,
And the moonbeams that lie like golden grain
On the breast of the purple sea,
My Love,
On the breast of the purple sea.

Then come away with me,
O'er the sunny, sunny hills,
To a land where love is free
As the rolling of the rills,
Calm and quiet as the caves
That shine along the shore,
And constant as the waves
That sweep for evermore,
My Love,
That sweep for evermore.

COLD IS THE SURF.

COLD is the surf as it hissingly splashes
Far o'er the sea-sand, the cliff, and the clay ;
Cold are the gleams of the lightning's pale flashes,
Shining, and shooting, and stealing away.

Cold is the mist as it rolls up the mountain,
Or lies on the lips of the heaven-loving lake ;
Cold is the fall of the dell-hidden fountain ;
Cold are the rocks where the rough billows break.

Cold is the snow-wreath the wild winter weaveth—
The dying year's diadem, pillow, and shroud ;
Cold is the eye of the world when it leaveth
The wanderer—the outcast to die in the crowd.

Colder the sleep from which none can awaken,
The deep, calm repose, undisturbed by a breath :
The all-powerful, impalpable influence shaken
Down from the dark-waving pinions of death.

TO A FRIEND, EMIGRATING.

WHEN thou art gone a remembered ray
From our social sky will have melted away,
A string of the lyre will be silent quite,
And a planet have passed from the brow of night :
And when next we meet, thou wilt tossing be
On the rolling waves of the dark blue sea,
Sweeping along through the billowy foam,
To the far-off land that shall be thy home.
Yet, though from our presence thou wilt have passed
Like a rose on a roaring torrent cast ;
Though we hear not thy voice, and miss thy face,
When we look on the old accustomed place ;
Thou shalt still a spot in our memory fill,
Like the sound of a brook when the winds are still,
Or the gorgeous colours that lingering play
In the west, when the sun has passed away.
Yes, recollect we will think of thee,
When our hearts beat high, and our souls feel free ;
When mirth lights up the lip and the eye,
And the murmurs of music float and die.
And when pensive fancies pleasantly weave

A bower for the soul on the summer eve,
When the mind feels sad, and we scarce know why,
A tear seems ready to start to the eye,
And we, half-unconsciously, heave a sigh ;
Then our thoughts will sweep o'er the ocean foam,
From the present scene, and the land of home,
To rest with thee.

Well, in this world

Love stands ever with wings unfurled ;
They who taste the honey must feel the smart,
And friends—the dearest of friends, must part.
O ! where'er thou goest by land or sea,
May the God of thy fathers go with thee ;
May his boundless love be above thee bent,
Like the glorious azure firmament ;
And when on the ocean thou art alone,
May his power like the waves be about thee thrown,
To guide thee, from fear and danger free,
To the shore where “ a true heart is waiting for thee.”
May thy path be smooth, may thy heart be light,
May thy life be calm as a summer night ;
Where the silver planets serenely sleep,
And the light winds like wandering minstrels sweep,
And a hush like an angel's wing unfurled,
Rests on the brow of the slumbering world.

Pray accept these lines, though hurried and weak,
And let them in broken accents speak

The writer's wish, that to thee be given
The joy of Earth, and the peace of Heaven :
And let them awhile in thy memory dwell,
As the dying notes of a friend's farewell.

OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY !

O ! LAUGH at love, and never fear,
But let this thought your spirit cheer,
We yet shall see a brighter day,
Over the hills and far away !

My friend 's been cooing like a dove,
And really risking all for love ;
Aha ! a different pipe we'll play,
Over the hills and far away !

For all the smiles that dawn and fade
Upon the face of mortal maid ;
Give me the lights and shades that play,
Over the hills and far away !

Uncircumscribed by woman's wiles,
And unseduced by woman's smiles ;
There's healthy work, and princely pay,
Over the hills and far away !

The moon and stars are dying dim,
Before the sun whose rising rim

Shall pilot us through twilight gray,
Over the hills and far away !

Then let the social caldron seethe,
A purer atmosphere we'll breathe ;
We'll laugh, and smoke long pipes of clay,
Over the hills and far away !

Arouse yourself, and quickly roll
These lazy mists from off your soul ;
And leap to greet the golden day,
Over the hills and far away !

Like thistle-down love lightly flies,
And like a foam-flake swiftly dies ;
Then let him die, while we cry—hey !
Over the hills and far away !

AN EPITHALMIUM.

THERE are stars that fall
And disappear ;
THERE are stars that shine
Serene and clear ;
THERE are double stars,
Which together sweep
THEIR appointed path
Through the trackless deep.

And so on earth,
There are some who die,
When love and youth
Have just lit their eye ;
THERE are some condemned
To a lonely life,
Whom no kind voice cheers
In time's stern strife.

And there are whose lot
Is to blend their rays

With a kindred soul,
Through their earthly days ;
Like their types on high,
Which together move,
In an atmosphere
Of light and love.

May the happy pair
Who inspire my lay,
Find their life to pass
Like a summer's day :—
A dew-gemmed morn,
And a glorious noon,
And an evening lit
By the clear, calm moon.

May their life be that
Of the lustrous stars,
Which no clouds eclipse,
No tempest mars ;
May a life and death
Like theirs be given,—
A long shining course,
And a place in Heaven.

THE MOON SHINES ON US ALL.

THE moon shines on us all,
On the blighted and the blest,
Wherever we may wander,
Or wherever we may rest :
Though mountains rise between us,
And waters flash and fall,
We have still one consolation,—
The moon shines on us all.

Some of us dwell in cities,
Some wander like a wave
Without a settled resting-place,
And some are in the grave :
But still though parted—sundered,
As Life or Death may call,
Look up and hope, the heavens are blue,
And the moon shines on us all.

WORKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

I.

In Foolsap 8vo., Cloth, gilt, Handsomely Printed,

Price 2s. 6d.,

TRYPHENA AND OTHER POEMS.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

We have read these early efforts of his muse with pleasure not unmingled with admiration, and are bound to say that they evince the right *afflatus*, the true spirit of poetry.—*Sunderland Herald*.

There is so much merit in this, the first production of a new author, that we augur well for future success. Many of the pieces are well written. . . . In the principal poem, the narrative of the tale is well sustained, and considerable skill is shewn in the versification.—*Literary Gazette*.

In the minor poems a fine strain of sombre devotional feeling pervades the whole. "Ashes to ashes," and "Be still, and know that I am God"; "Life" and "The House on the Rock," are gems of serene and holy ray which prove Mr. Fletcher to possess a high poetic imagination and a truly devotional spirit.—*Morning Advertiser*.

His style is clear and flowing, and his versification particularly harmonious. There are, moreover, lines and stanzas in the minor poems of great power, beauty, and originality.—*Oxford Chronicle*.

The volume contained some really good poetry, which manifested great skill in the harmony and fluency of the verse, and shewed the author to be a man of a refined and exalted sensibility, having a mind well stored with sprightly poetic images. Well do we recollect with what delight we read his poems, so deeply imbued with a religious spirit, so full of love for whatever is beautiful, and for all those affections that cluster round home and hallowed places.—*Bradford Observer*.

II.

SECOND EDITION,

Handsomely Printed in Foolscap 8vo., Price 6d.,

THE BATTLE OF THE ALMA.

A National Ballad.

O, such a day,
So fought, so followed, and so fairly won
Came not, till now, to dignify the times,
Since Cæsar's fortunes !

—SHAKSPEARE : *King Henry IV.*

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

We unhesitatingly place in the foremost rank *The Battle of the Alma*, by John William Fletcher. For lyrical energy we have seen nothing on the events of the war which surpasses it. It is all a-blaze with fire, all alive with the rush of martial hosts. We all but hear the tremendous conflict in the forcible description of the poet. The live blood tingles in the reader's veins as he follows the champions of freedom till "the rocky heights are reft." Not dealing with words so much as with thick-coming deeds of daring, of Titanic strife, we grow almost dizzy with the poet's rapidity, with the eager manner in which he fights the battle over again. We are proud and pleased to say that in Mr. Fletcher the bravery of our soldiers has met with an able expositor. We are indisposed to present an extract, lest we should break thereby the full swing and energy of the ballad ; but we strongly direct our readers to this little volume, which it is gratifying to see has already reached a second edition.—*The Critic*.

There is much patriotic fire, much generous enthusiasm, and much fervid eloquence in this ballad. The author has a fertile imagination, a powerful style, and a great facility of versification.—*The Britannia*.

It is the effort of a poet of humbler pretensions to honour a mighty national event of our own day, by celebrating it in a ballad, after a fashion which the example of a great man has

made popular. The metre is fine, and the language in many places grand: without fear of being gainsayed, we venture to affirm that Macaulay himself might not be ashamed of the authorship.—*Bristol Times*.

Mr. Fletcher deserves a fair share of commendation, so long as there exists British enthusiasm for British valour. This poetical production on the "Battle of the Alma" is very pleasing to read; it is harmoniously smooth, simple in expression, circumstantial in observation yet comprehensive in its scope, and far from monotonous in its general flow of sentiment and versification.—*Oldham Chronicle*.

"The Battle of the Alma" . . well deserving to be termed a "National Ballad" in a double sense, from the graceful adroitness with which the national glories and laurels of England and France are continually interwoven. We regard this ballad as a truly noble one, poured out, from first to last, with scarcely mitigated eloquence and enthusiasm, from the twin fountains of poetry and patriotism. It rather responds to the national feelings, fully and fervently, than depends upon them for partiality of judgement. We do not think the poetry fine merely because we are patriotic, but we feel it to be so because it replies adequately to the acclaiming spirit of patriotism within us. With the exception of a few careless lines, "The Battle of the Alma" has all the high elements of martial and patriotic song.—*Durham Advertiser*.

One of the innumerable poetical productions the present campaign has, in some way or other, been the means of bringing before the world; and—what is more—one of the best of the lot. Mr. Fletcher was not unknown to fame previously, but the present little effort ought to be sufficient proof of his possessing the powers of the true poet in no mean degree. He has succeeded admirably in the harmony of his versification, while for beauty of idea and expression some of his stanzas are perfect gems.—*Exeter Flying Post*.

III.

Imperial 32mo., sewed, red edges, Price 6d.,

FLIRTATION;

OR, THE WAY INTO THE WILDERNESS.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

These few pages of clever rhyme, are by JOHN WILLIAM FLETCHER, author of "Tryphena and other Poems," who, having himself passed "thorough brake, thorough brier," and got himself well scratched, now benevolently endeavours to preserve Young England from being betrayed by flirtation into "the wilderness."—*Gateshead Observer*.

The versification is not far from perfect, and there is much wisdom in the moral of the story. A little poem ("The Eagle that never dies") sewed up with the one heading this notice, we like amazingly: the humour is exquisite and has a fitting subject.—*Sunderland News*.

The Catastrophe—the death of the hero, from causes originating in the "flirtation" of the heroine, is given with great truth and tenderness, and fortunately without any vicious minglings of the facetious and familiar. The conclusion is eminently tender and beautiful, and marks, indeed, the true vein of its author.—*Durham Advertiser*.

There is some poetry, and no lack of clever versification, in this *brochure*, which details in heroic measure, and in a sort of serio-comic style, the wiles of an unamiable flirt, and the woes of her unpitied victim.—*Dumfries Standard*.

Stanford University Libraries



3 6105 009 650 461

STANFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
CECIL H. GREEN LIBRARY
STANFORD, CALIFORNIA 94305-6004
(415) 723-1493

All books may be recalled after 7 days

DATE DUE

